

BCPS High School Capacity & Conditions Study: Community Outreach Study

Submitted by:

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Submitted to:

Baltimore County Public Schools

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Executive Summary

- Toward Three Finalist Scenarios

Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) commissioned Sage Policy Group, Inc. (Sage), along with its subcontractor GWWO, Inc. /Architects (GWWO), to analyze how best to address the system's impending high school capacity shortfall. Specifically, the system faces a 1,700 high school seat shortfall by the 2027-28 school year. This number can be misleading, however, since it presumes that all available capacity will be utilized, meaning that no schools will operate under-enrolled. Unfortunately, existing capacity is not always located where capacity is needed. In response to public input, the analysis was eventually broadened to include an assessment of the extent to which high school conditions could be strategically addressed in the context of capacity augmentation and more efficient capacity utilization.

The Sage study team designed the multi-month, multi-pronged Community Outreach Strategy (COS) to gather as much information as possible from as many conceivable stakeholders regarding public sentiment on topics such as new school construction, additions, renovations, magnet programs, and boundary change processes. The COS included multiple focus groups held at various schools across the system, two online surveys collectively generating nearly 10,000 responses, and multiple charrette-style gallery walks.

Initially, the study team developed seven scenarios for stakeholder consideration. These seven scenarios were organized around a primary theory of action. For instance, one of them focused heavily upon balancing capacity and enrollment through an abundance of boundary change processes. Others focused more on capital projects, while others made intense use of magnet programs to balance or roughly balance enrollment at each high school. Importantly, these seven scenarios were not intended to represent final recommendations, but rather were designed to generate robust community input.

Three clear concerns emerged from the first round of community outreach. First, the public wanted this process to consider facility conditions. Second, it was clear that neighborhood continuity in school feeder patterns represents a priority for many BCPS stakeholders. Third, improving instructional opportunities while minimizing boundary changes was a priority, suggesting that expanding magnet programs should be a priority.

On July 27th, interim superintendent Verletta White issued a public letter explaining that the community outreach study would be expanded to include new scenarios that incorporate considerations of school conditions, a second survey, and another series of gallery walks to collect additional information regarding public sentiment. The outcome of the superintendent's directive was the creation of three additional scenarios for public consideration, generically labeled Scenarios A, B, and C, that blend various approaches to balancing enrollment and capacity for each high school while addressing many of the most serious high school physical conditions.

While each of the three new scenarios is associated with a price tag of approximately \$600 million, they differ along multiple dimensions, including with respect to how many capital projects are implicated, where they will be implemented, how many students will be susceptible to boundary change processes, and how many magnet program seats will be added.

A second online survey garnering nearly 6,300 responses produced no obvious preferable choice between the three scenarios at the system-wide level. However, at the regional level, there are significant differences between the scenarios in terms of preference, with the Central area strongly favoring certain outcomes, and the Southeast and other areas strongly favoring others.

- Near-Term Priorities

Whether BCPS leadership embraces one of the three scenarios as the solution, an admixture of the three, or some variant, our analysis reveals that there are certain pressing priorities that should be addressed as soon as possible. Given the magnitude of the endeavor and uncertainties regarding the availability of State capital funds, it is conceivable that implementation will require two decades or more.

1. A new Towson High School (or at Loch Raven). Both Scenarios A and B call for a new Towson High School offering 1,700 seats, which represents an addition of 440 net new seats vis-à-vis the status quo. These seats would go a long way toward alleviating near-term overcrowding issues, while addressing conditions at one of the most challenging high schools from the perspective of physical plant. This 1,700-seat figure has been put forward because of a growing consensus among some educational leaders in Maryland that this represents the maximum desirable size for a high school. Undoubtedly, there are many who would prefer a new but smaller Towson High School, but the Central area needs net new seats desperately.

This is not to suggest that improvements are not required at Dulaney, Loch Raven, and elsewhere. Two of our scenarios call for a new school at Dulaney, while one calls for a major renovation. All three of the scenarios call for a new school at Loch Raven, which would also add many needed seats in the Central area. In fact, a new 1,700-seat school at Loch Raven would add more net new seats in the Central area than a similarly-situated Towson facility. However, Towson High School is deemed to be in slightly worse shape physically. Several years ago, GWWO Architects authored a report to supply school condition scores to each BCPS school. In that report, Dulaney High School received a score of 2.45, Loch Raven 2.39, Towson 2.36, and Lansdowne 1.74.

2. Adding Seats at Sparrows Point and/or Patapsco High School. Optimally, there would be a new school at Sparrows Point that would allow for physical separation between the high school and middle school, a stakeholder priority. However, the imperative to deal with prospective overcrowding in the Southeast remains, which will require additional seats at Sparrows Point High School (e.g. through a renovation, Scenario B) or at Patapsco High School (e.g. via an addition, Scenario A).
3. A New School at Lansdowne. One could defend this as a priority simply on the basis of school condition. It would be difficult to find a BCPS high school in worse physical shape than Lansdowne. But there is more to consider. The Southwest is overcrowded, particularly at Catonsville. Choices are few. One could conceivably add seats at Catonsville, but it would be enormous and leave Lansdowne in its present state. In our judgment, the better solution is a new Lansdowne to which a limited number of Catonsville students would be shifted. If this new school encompassed 1,700 seats, which is consistent with Scenario B, an additional 280 net new seats would be created in the Southwest. One could also embrace an expansion at the Western School of Technology, which would also serve to expand the number of magnet seats. However, this could produce a significant increase in operating costs due to the special instructional requirements attached to magnet programs. It would also potentially interrupt activity at a school that represents a BCPS success story despite its physical limitations.

Introduction

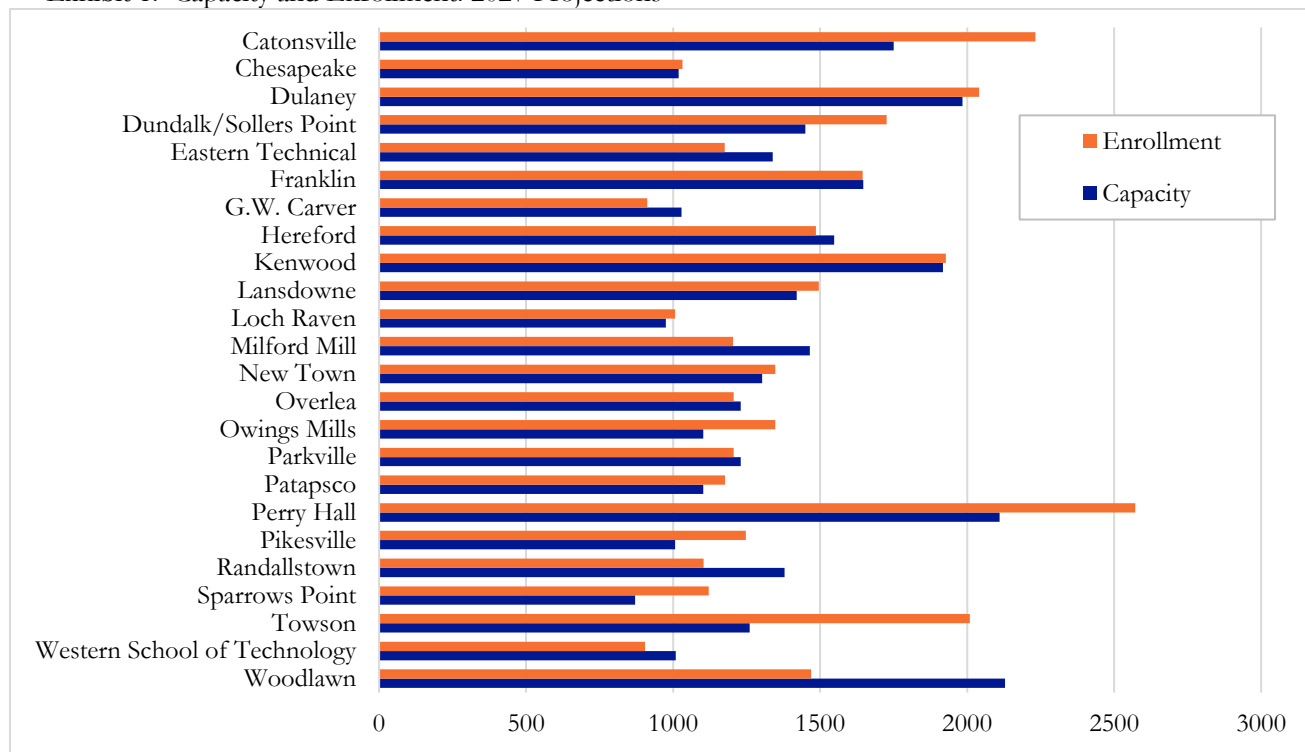
Identifying Options to Address Both Capacity and Conditions of BCPS High Schools

Baltimore County's public high schools are characterized by both current and future overcrowding. Over the next ten years, BCPS will face a 1,700 seat shortfall at its high schools based on the latest school enrollment projections. These projections are based on a cohort survival model and therefore are largely driven by students who are already in the system while also accounting for residential development.

At first blush, the issue doesn't appear especially daunting. After all, the shortfall of seats is approximately equal to the size of a new high school. However, capacity issues are spread across the county's system, so simply supplying one new high school in any given location fails to address the issue. Moreover, the 1,700 figure is somewhat misleading. It presumes that all of the existing seats will be used going forward – that no BCPS high school will be operating under-capacity going forward. However, to the extent that seats remain under-utilized, the ultimate shortfall is greater than 1,700 seats.

Exhibit 1 supplies projections of enrollment and capacity at 24 BCPS high schools in the school year 2027-2028. Note that certain schools are positioned to be substantially over-utilized in the foreseeable future, including Catonsville, Perry Hall, and Towson.

Exhibit 1. Capacity and Enrollment: 2027 Projections



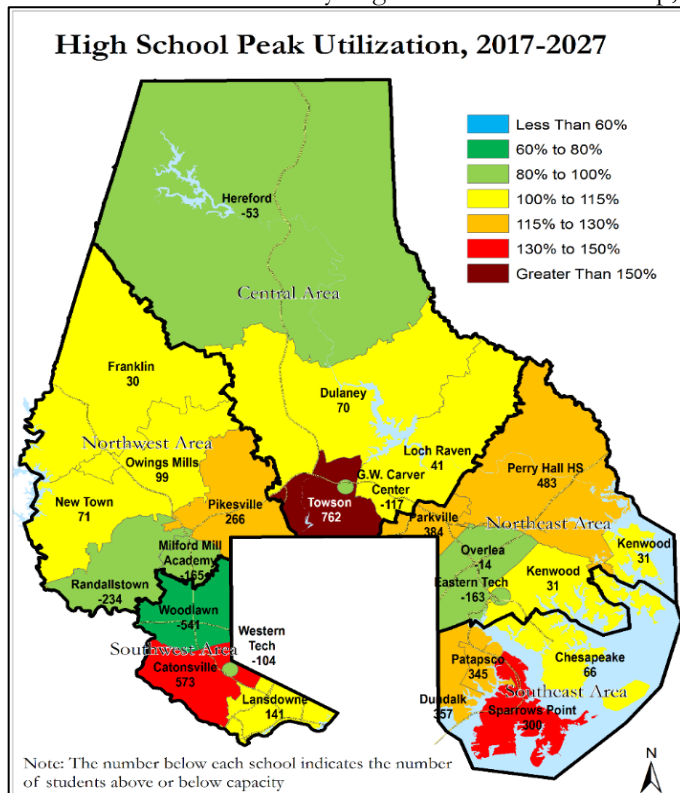
Source: BCPS, Sage

There are a number of tools available to deal with this, including new school construction, additions to existing schools, boundary change processes, and the creation/movement of magnet programs. Rather than imposing solutions on BCPS stakeholders, the study team engaged in a multi-month public engagement process to determine which solutions were viewed most favorably, or alternatively, produced the least vocal resistance. Essentially, the study team:

- A. Introduced a set of seven initial scenarios in which “the math” worked, meaning that capacity would equal enrollment under each scenario;
- B. Invited the public to comment on these scenarios through a survey, focus groups, and several public gallery walks;
- C. Broadened the study to include consideration of school conditions based on public input and with the blessing of BCPS;
- D. Supplied three modified scenarios based on public input with an eye toward addressing both capacity and the worst school conditions, again with the math working under each scenario;
- E. Invited the public to comment on these scenarios through a different survey instrument and additional public gallery walks;
- F. Produced a final report and presentation.

This report supplies the study team’s fully refined scenarios based on analysis and public input. The balance of this report also summarizes feedback gleaned from focus groups, surveys, and gallery walks.

Exhibit 2. Baltimore County High School Utilization Map, 2017–2027



Source: Baltimore County Public Schools

Exhibit 2 supplies an illustration of how severe the capacity issues will be in certain schools. The red and dark brown parts of the map represent the most problematic areas. In areas designated in red, high school enrollment is projected to be between 130 and 150 percent of state rated capacity (SRC) over the forecast horizon. The dark brown area associated with Towson High School represents enrollments in excess of 150 percent of SRC. Areas associated with Perry Hall, Parkville, Pikesville, and Patapsco will have enrollments of 115 of SRC or greater, the threshold at which a school is considered to be overcrowded.

As stakeholders noted, overcrowding is problematic for a number of reasons. Too many students in a school can create safety hazards for both the students as well as the faculty and school administrators. In addition, overcrowding can dramatically diminish the learning experience as trailers and other stop-gap measures are used to provide necessary seating and classroom space.

To deal with this problem, Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) commissioned Sage Policy Group, Inc. (Sage) along with its sub-contractor GWWO, Inc. /Architects (GWWO) to analyze BCPS' expected high school capacity constraints and set forth recommendations for how those limitations can best be addressed. Sage was tasked with gauging community sentiment regarding the various proposed scenarios and using those impressions to iterate toward final recommendations.

With BCPS approval, the Community Outreach Strategy (COS) targeted BCPS stakeholders through three synergistic mechanisms: focus groups, charrette-style gallery walks (public information sessions), and online surveys. Information gleaned during focus groups, which preceded the other two elements of the COS, was used to refine the scenarios before the survey and public information sessions. The initial survey and public information sessions, which were open to all community members, ran concurrently and occurred between July 9th and July 22nd of 2018.

The input gathered through the initial three public information sessions and survey was then used to produce another iteration of scenarios. At this time the study was also expanded to include consideration of high school conditions and the extent to which these could be strategically addressed in the context of dealing with pressing capacity issues. The community also requested the study team consider community continuity in the development of the new scenarios. The new scenarios were then evaluated via a second set of three public information sessions and an additional survey. The following table supplies a summary timeline of the three phases of the COS.

Community Engagement Strategy Element	Dates
First Phase	
Focus Groups	June 18-20 th , June 25 th
Second Phase	
July Public Information Sessions	July 9 th , July 12 th , July 17 th
First Online Survey	July 9 th – July 22 nd
Third Phase	
September/October Public Information Sessions	Sep. 18th, Sep. 24th, Oct. 2nd
Second Online Survey	Sep. 18 th – Oct. 7 th

Phase One

- **Focus Groups**

The first phase of community engagement involved a number of focus groups with stakeholders throughout Baltimore County. These focus groups were scheduled and organized by BCPS personnel but were led entirely by members of the study team, including by Sage CEO Anirban Basu. BCPS invited a variety of stakeholders to each meeting ranging from parents of students within the school system, teachers and school administrators, and local homeowners. BCPS made an effort to include stakeholders from as many school districts in these focus groups to gather as wide an array of opinion as possible. Note that there were participants associated with each of the county's 24 high schools. In an effort to encourage open discussion, participant names were not disclosed, with the promise being that any statements would not be attributed to them by name.

The following table provides the dates and locations of the community focus groups:

Community Engagement Element	Dates	Location
Community Focus Groups	June 18 th	Catonsville High School
	June 19 th	Loch Raven High School
	June 20 th	Pikesville High School
	June 25 th	Dundalk High School
Principal's Focus Group	June 29 th	Greenwood, Building E

At the beginning of each focus group, participants were asked a series of questions to gauge their opinion on several topics relating to the capacity study. This could be considered a third survey, but responses to these questions have been grouped together with the discussion of focus group-derived feedback.

A majority of focus group participants (58 percent) indicated that the optimal size of a high school is between 1,000 and 1,400 students. It was generally believed that smaller schools are safer, in part because school staff and faculty are in a better position to forge constructive relationships with students.

Magnet programs were also very popular among a majority of focus group participants. Many stakeholders believe these programs expose students to professions and occupations to which they would otherwise not be exposed via standard school curricula. Many stakeholders noted a lack of equitable access to magnet programs across the system. Many also indicated that the magnet programs in which their children were most interested were effectively not available to them, including because of reasons related to early application requirements, impracticable transportation options, and conflicts created with other activities including team sports.

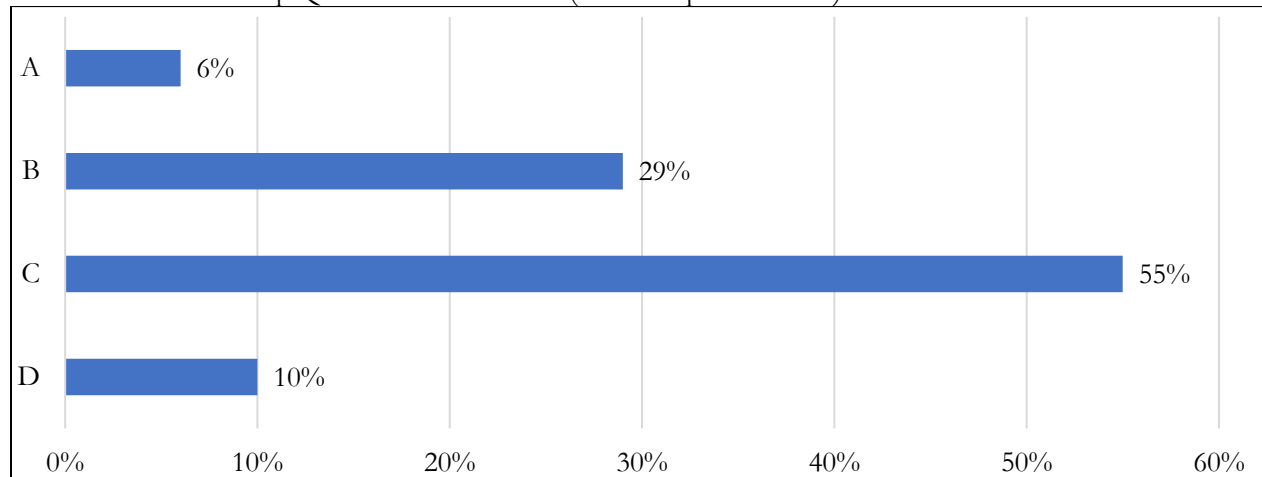
A plurality of participants shared the belief that neighborhood children should remain together as they make their way through the system. While addressing capacity is critical, current feeder patterns of elementary and middle schools are viewed as effectively breaking up neighborhoods.

Focus group participants were among the first stakeholders to request that the capacity study be broadened to include considerations of school condition. Many noted dangerous conditions, including vocal stakeholders from the Dulaney and Lansdowne school communities.

Finally, focus group participants routinely indicated that they were willing to pay more in taxes if it meant finding solutions to issues of high school capacity and condition. Ninety percent of group participants would be willing to accept some increase in property taxes to fund a workable solution, with a clear majority willing to accept an increase somewhere between 10 and 20 cents per \$100 of assessed value. What follows is a discussion of responses to questions asked at the onset of each focus group.

Question 1: The current Baltimore County property tax rate is \$1.10/\$100 of assessed value. What level of tax increase would be acceptable to you to permit BCPS to meet its capacity need?

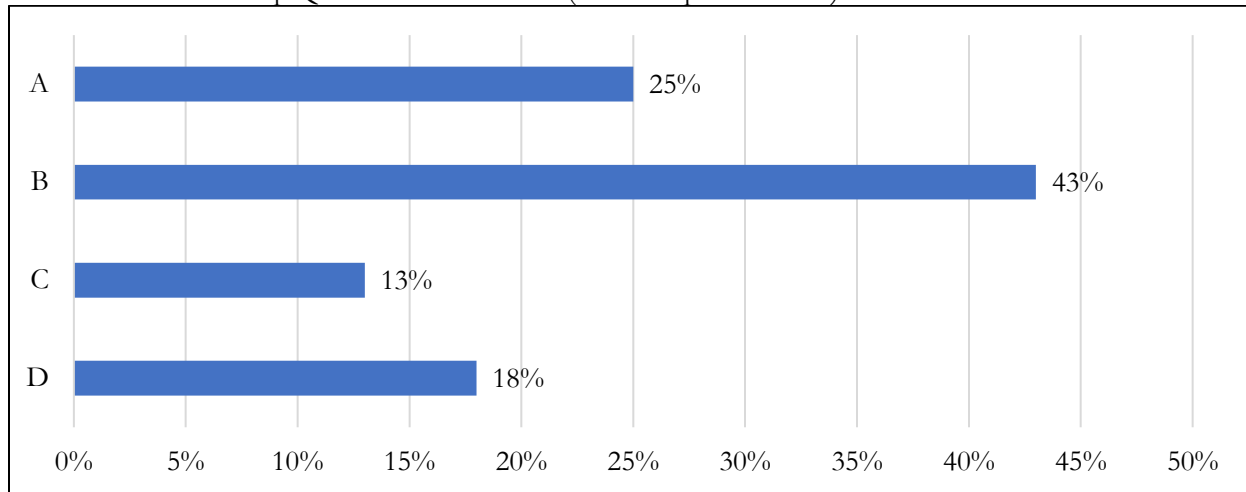
Exhibit 3. Focus Group Question 1 Breakdown (Total Respondents: 62)



- A. No Increase
- B. An increase of no more than 10 cents.
- C. An increase of between 10 and 20 cents.
- D. An increase of greater than 20 cents.

Question 2: How would you best characterize your willingness to allow a boundary change process impacting the school with which you are most closely affiliated?

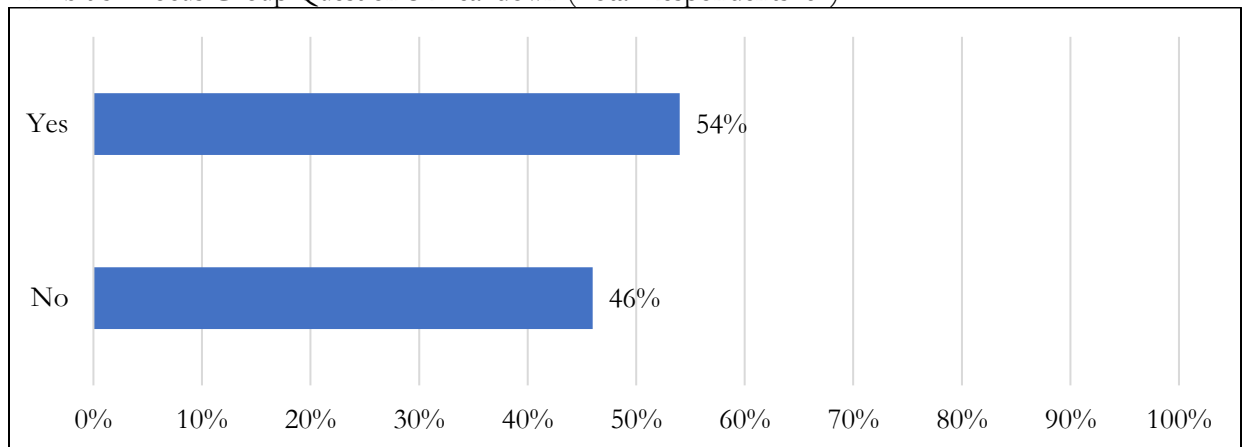
Exhibit 4. Focus Group Question 2 Breakdown (Total Respondents: 60)



- A. Extremely unwilling.
- B. Somewhat reluctant, but understand the potential need.
- C. Not concerned one way or another.
- D. Hopeful that such a process will take place.

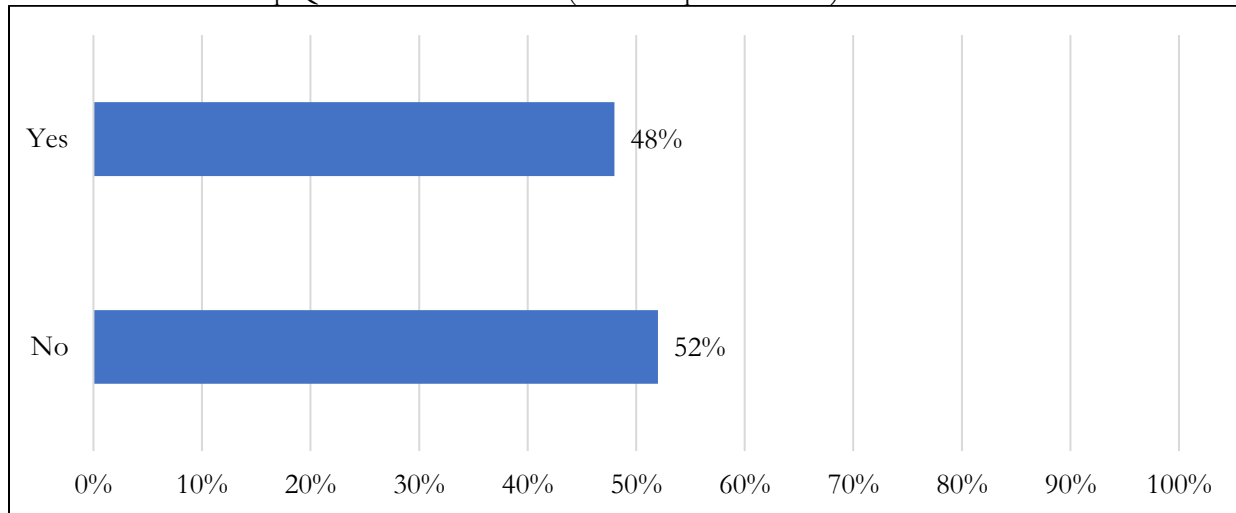
Question 3: Agree (Yes) or Disagree (No) – We have too few magnet programs in the county.

Exhibit 5. Focus Group Question 3 Breakdown (Total Respondents: 61)



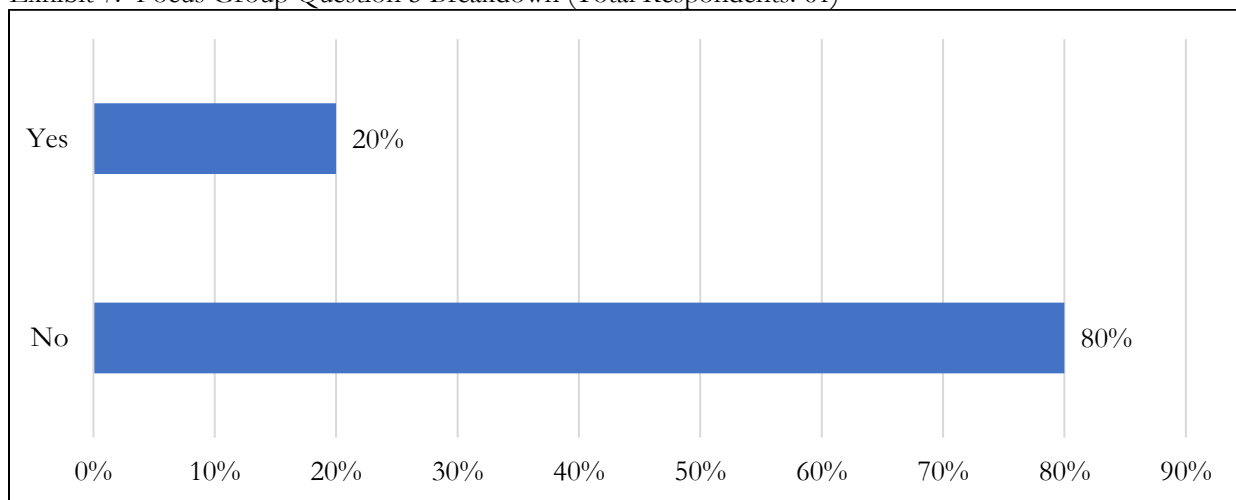
Question 4: Agree (Yes) or Disagree (No) – There is too much focus on magnets these days, and not enough on standard curricula.

Exhibit 6. Focus Group Question 4 Breakdown (Total Respondents: 50)



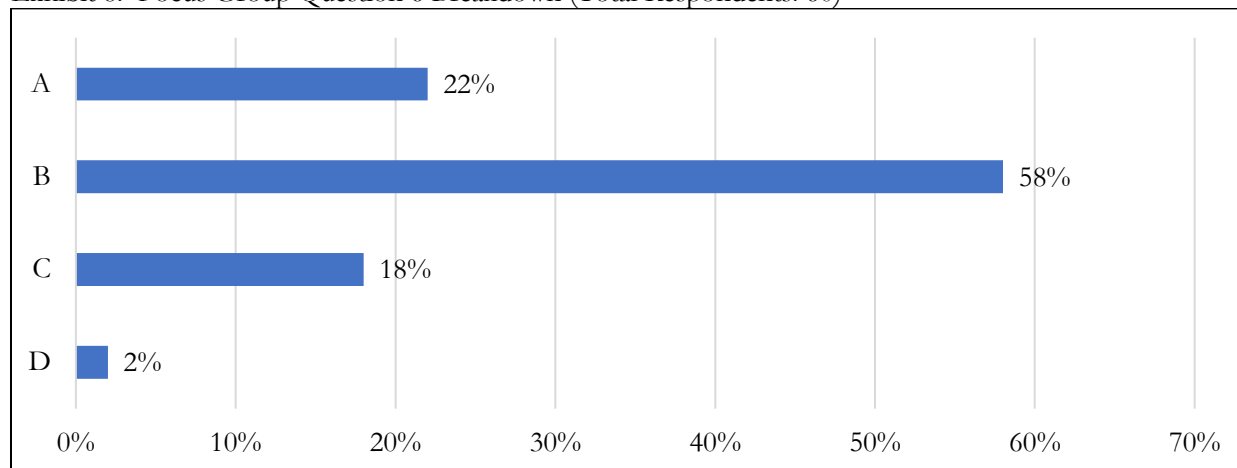
Question 5: Agree (Yes) or Disagree (No) – We need more magnet programs, but only in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) related categories.

Exhibit 7. Focus Group Question 5 Breakdown (Total Respondents: 61)



Question 6: What do you view as the optimal size of an individual high school?

Exhibit 8. Focus Group Question 6 Breakdown (Total Respondents: 60)



- A. Fewer than 1,000 students.
- B. Between 1,000 and 1,400 students.
- C. Between 1,400 and 1,800 students.
- D. Greater than 1,800 students.

- Closing Comments Regarding the Focus Groups

Some stakeholder groups were especially vocal. Among them was the contingent from Catonsville, who were expressive at focus groups, in surveys, and at gallery walks alike. This group of stakeholders indicated extreme aversion to any redistricting that involved Woodlawn to the north. Predictably, school communities associated with some of the most challenging school conditions, including at Lansdowne, Dulaney, Loch Raven, and Sparrows Point expressed considerable interest in replacement schools. Many Towson stakeholders also expressed a desire for a replacement school, but one that includes approximately 1,000-1,200 students. There are a number of reasons for this, including the possibility that certain Towson stakeholders would prefer to have a community high school that includes fewer students from non-Towson neighborhoods.

This raises another point. As the BCPS-hired study team, we were assigned to gather public input/opinion. As researchers and consultants, at no time did we seek to determine the legitimacy of certain viewpoints. We merely recorded them. It is not for us to assess the motives behind certain opinions. As the system's study team, we view our job as telling the Board, the Superintendent, and other system leaders what the public believes is in the best interest of their children, their grandchildren, their neighborhoods, their home values, etc. It is not for us to impose our value systems on BCPS stakeholders. Accordingly, the solutions we present in this report are not solely a reflection of our views regarding best options, but reflect the opinions of the system's core stakeholders.

Phase Two

- **The Initial Gallery Walks**

The second phase of the study consisted of a survey and gallery walks, the first set of which presented seven potential scenarios to the general public as well as an online survey that they could take onsite. Similar to the focus groups, the gallery walks were held throughout the county so that stakeholders from different regions would each enjoy a convenient opportunity to view, critique, and provide general feedback as to what they liked and disliked regarding the presented scenarios.

The initial gallery walk took place on July 9, 2018 at Catonsville High School. The second gallery walk took place on July 12, 2018 at the George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology. It was at this gallery walk that the study team informed the public that the study's scope had been expanded to include facility conditions. A third gallery walk transpired at Dundalk High School on July 17, 2018.

At the beginning of this process, presenting scenarios represented an exercise in experimentation. The initial seven scenarios were each forged around some primary theory of action. For instance, one scenario emphasized boundary changes that would induce the efficient utilization of existing excess capacity at certain schools (e.g. Woodlawn, Milford Mill). Two other scenarios emphasized the utilization of magnet programs to shift enrollment in ways that generated greater alignment between capacity and enrollment. Others emphasize substantial capital spending.

By using this method, the study team was able to quickly glean what stakeholders found to be the least palatable options. This allowed us to eliminate certain options quickly and to efficiently iterate to more workable, acceptable solutions.

The following scenarios were presented at the three initial gallery walks. Each depiction of the scenarios has three important parts. The section on the left shows enrollment figures absent intervention. In other words, if the status quo prevails and school enrollment grows as projected, then this is what Baltimore County high school enrollment and capacity will look like in 2027. The section in the middle shows proposed interventions to solve the problem. These actions include building new schools, additions to existing schools, renovations, boundary changes, and the movement/expansion/creation of magnet programs. The section on the right shows enrollment numbers following the prescribed intervention.

During the gallery walks, many attendees asked questions regarding how the study team reached the capital cost estimates. Part of the answer lies in the composition of the study team itself, which included GWWO Architects, which has worked with BCPS for decades. However, that in and of itself represents only a partial response. In computing capital project costs, estimates took the following factors into consideration: 1) the number of students that would be added to each impacted school, 2) the additional gross square footage the school would need to house those new students, and 3) the costs per square foot associated with the capital project, which is a function of many things, including whether the proposed capital project is a replacement school, an addition, or a renovation. Ultimately, the study team based per square foot cost estimates on similarly situated projects that have recently taken place in the region, are taking place within the region, or have recently been cost-estimated.

Scenario 1: Use Existing Seats

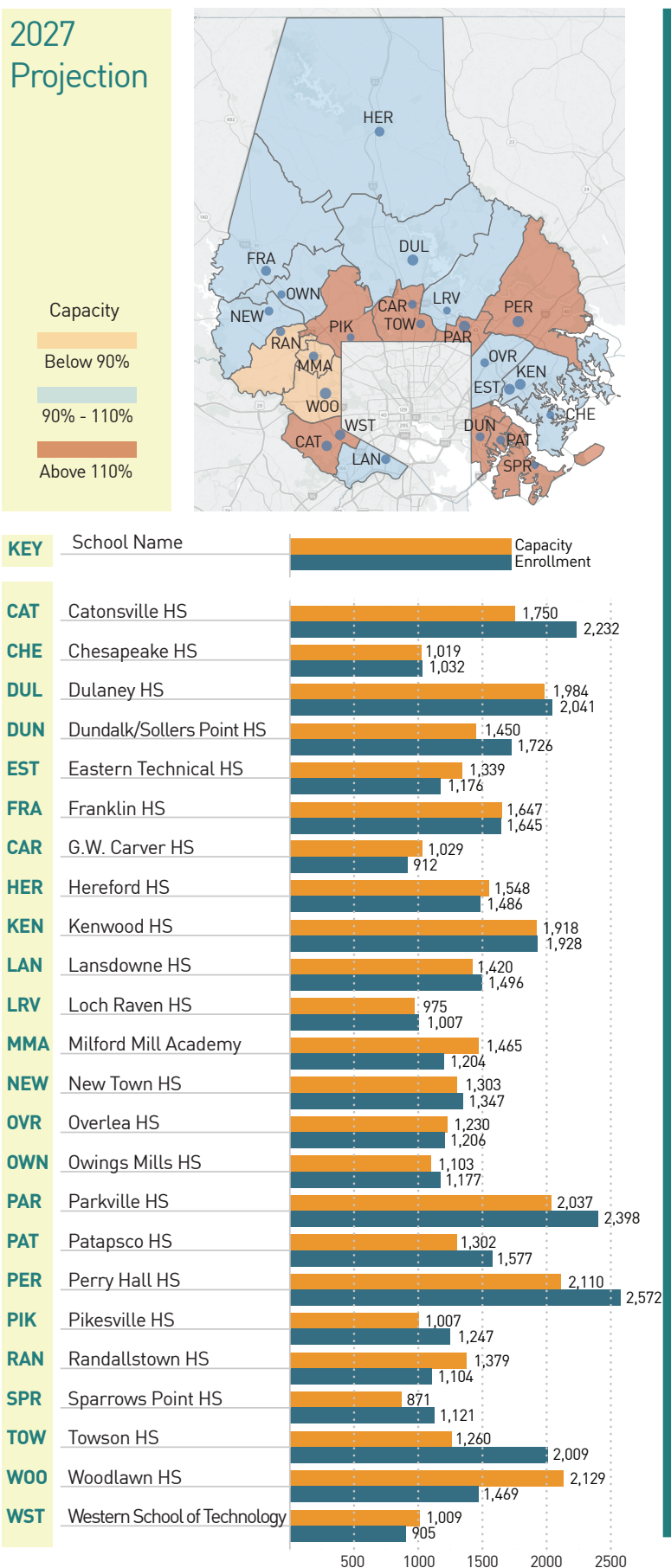
In Scenario 1, entitled “Use Existing Seats”, the study team focused on utilizing any available seats wherever possible. This scenario involves a significant amount of redistricting, especially in the Southwest part of the county. Again, these initial scenarios were never intended to represent final recommendations. Rather, these scenarios were crafted specifically to gather public input, whether positive or negative.

One potential advantage of this scenario is that it renders it more likely that the State will supply capital funding for school construction. This is because *ceteris paribus* the State prefers to fund capital projects when school systems make efficient utilization of existing capacity. In crafting these and other scenarios, the study team deployed a rule in which no student would be required to move more than one boundary through a prospective boundary change process. The scenario is also associated with significant capacity augmentation at certain schools coupled with boundary processes that would move students to that new capacity:

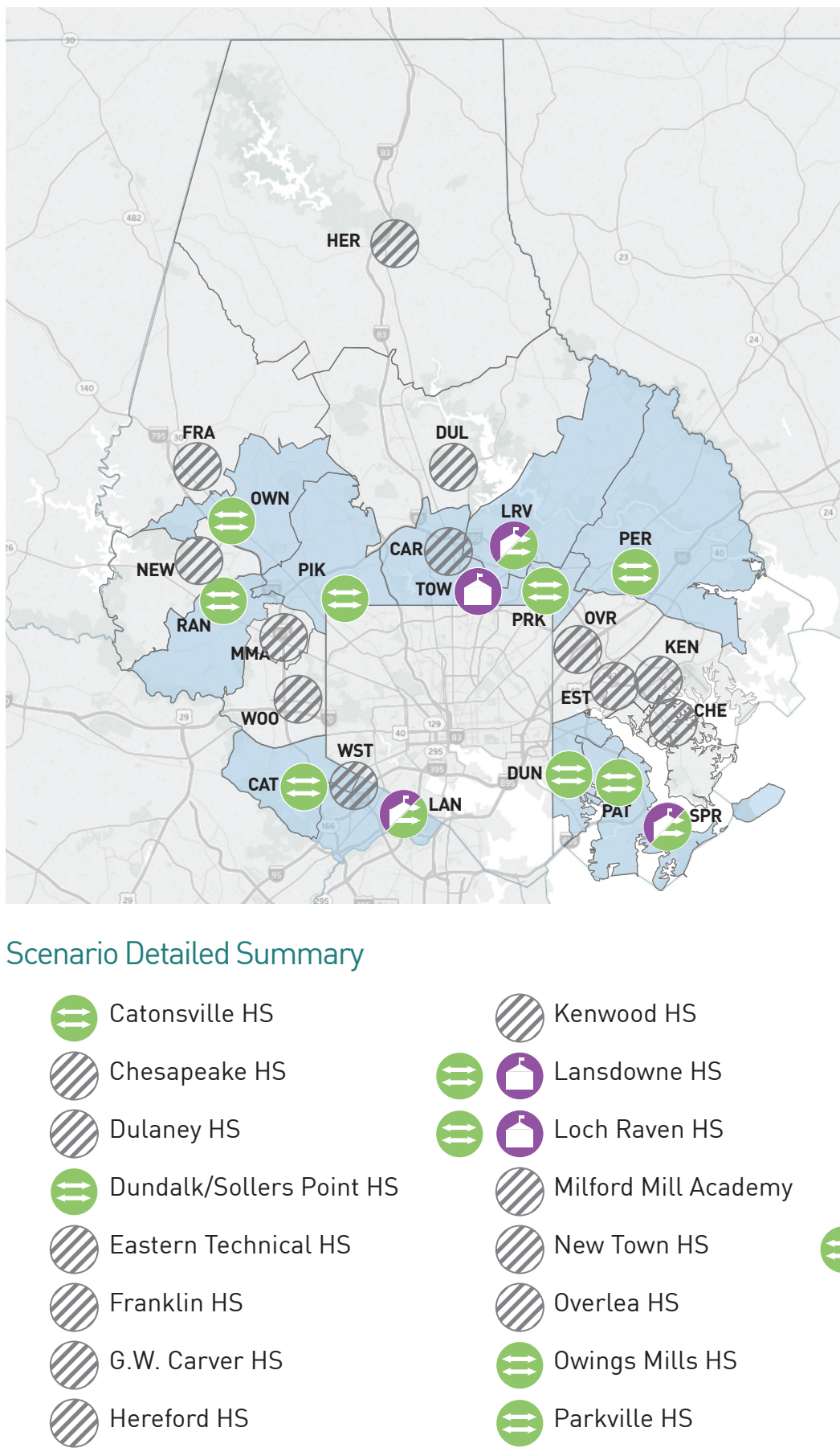
- 1) Lansdowne High School (+580 seats)
- 2) Loch Raven High School (+850 seats)
- 3) Sparrows Point High School (+765 seats)
- 4) Towson High School (+740 seats).

Total capital costs associated with this scenario equal \$491 million. The scenario would add 2,935 seats to BCPS high school capacity, and would relocate 2,638 students via boundary changes.

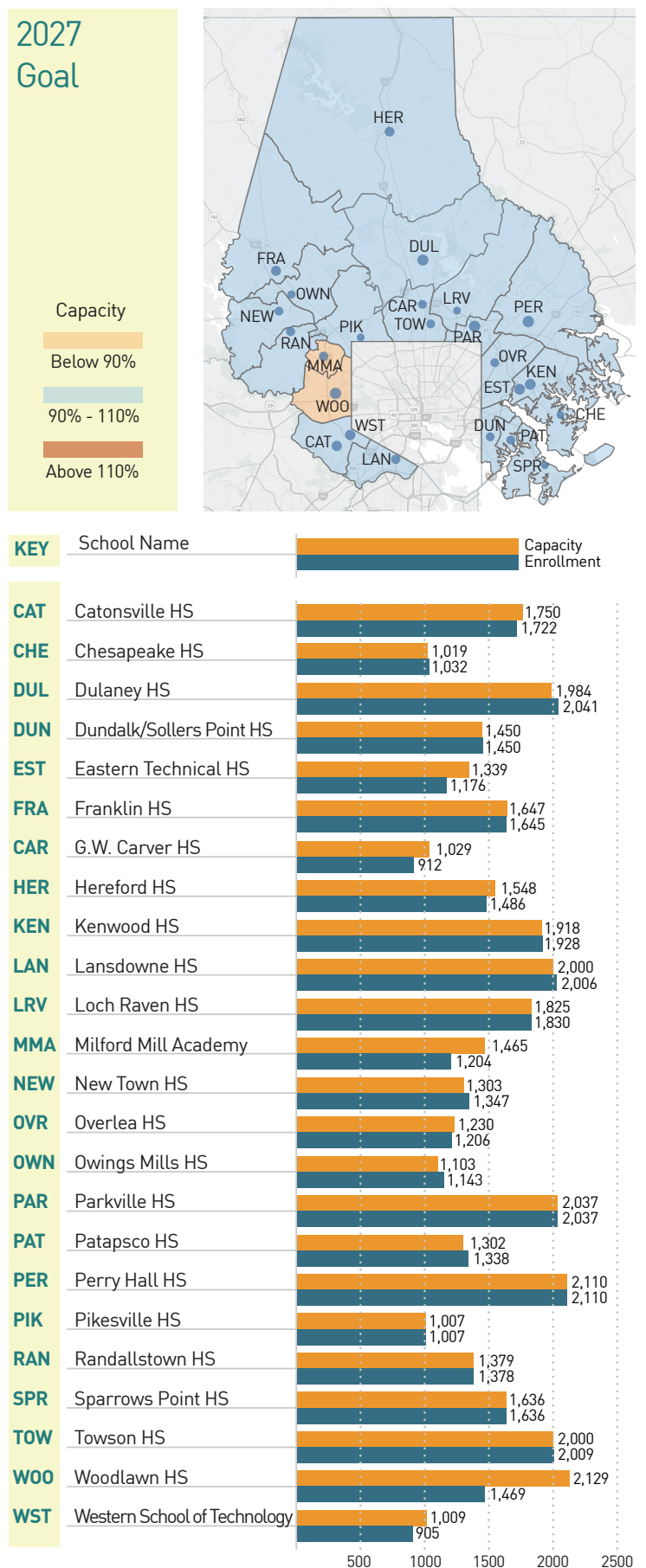
BEFORE:



SCENARIO 1 ACTION:



RESULT:



Scenario 2: Use Existing Seats Aggressively

The second scenario is similar to the first in that it prioritizes using existing seats in presently and prospectively under-enrolled schools. This scenario would use available capacity even more aggressively than Scenario 1. Accordingly, capital costs are suppressed and estimated at \$275 million.

There would be two replacement schools under this scenario:

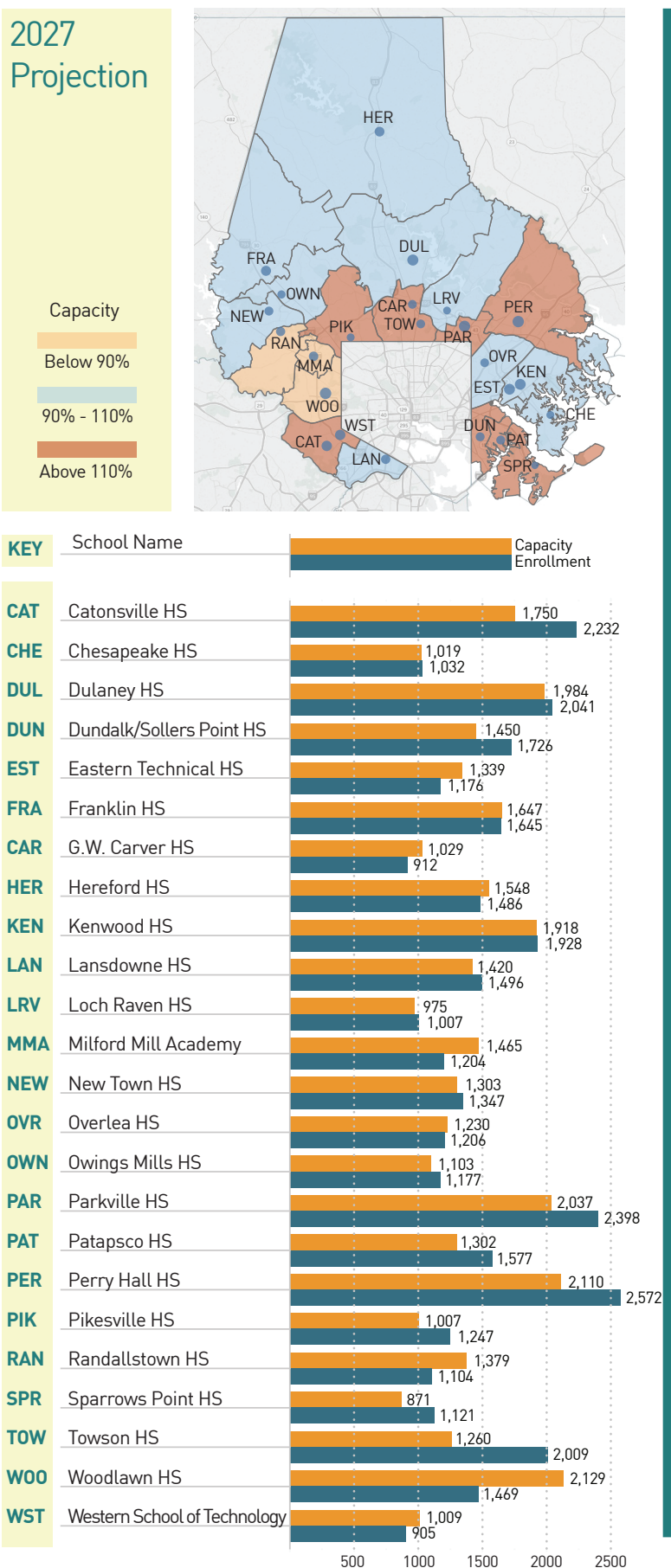
- 1) Loch Raven High School (+1,025 seats)
- 2) Towson High School (+740 seats)

There would be two additions to existing schools under this scenario:

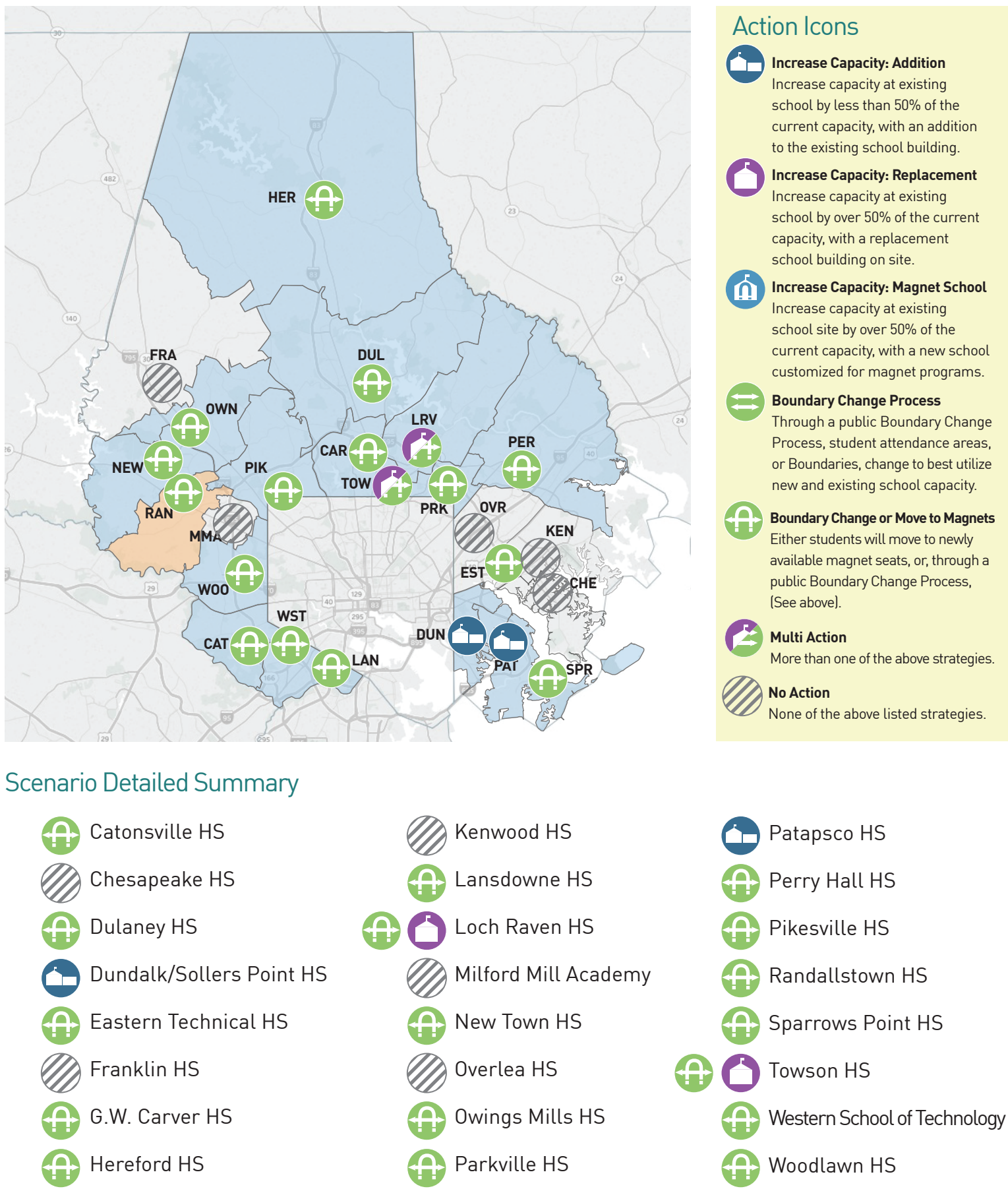
- 1) Dundalk/Sollers Point High School (+280 seats)
- 2) Patapsco High School (+280 seats)

This scenario would add an additional 2,325 seats of which 384 would be in magnet programs. The scenario would also relocate 2,246 students via a boundary change process or a voluntary move to a magnet program.

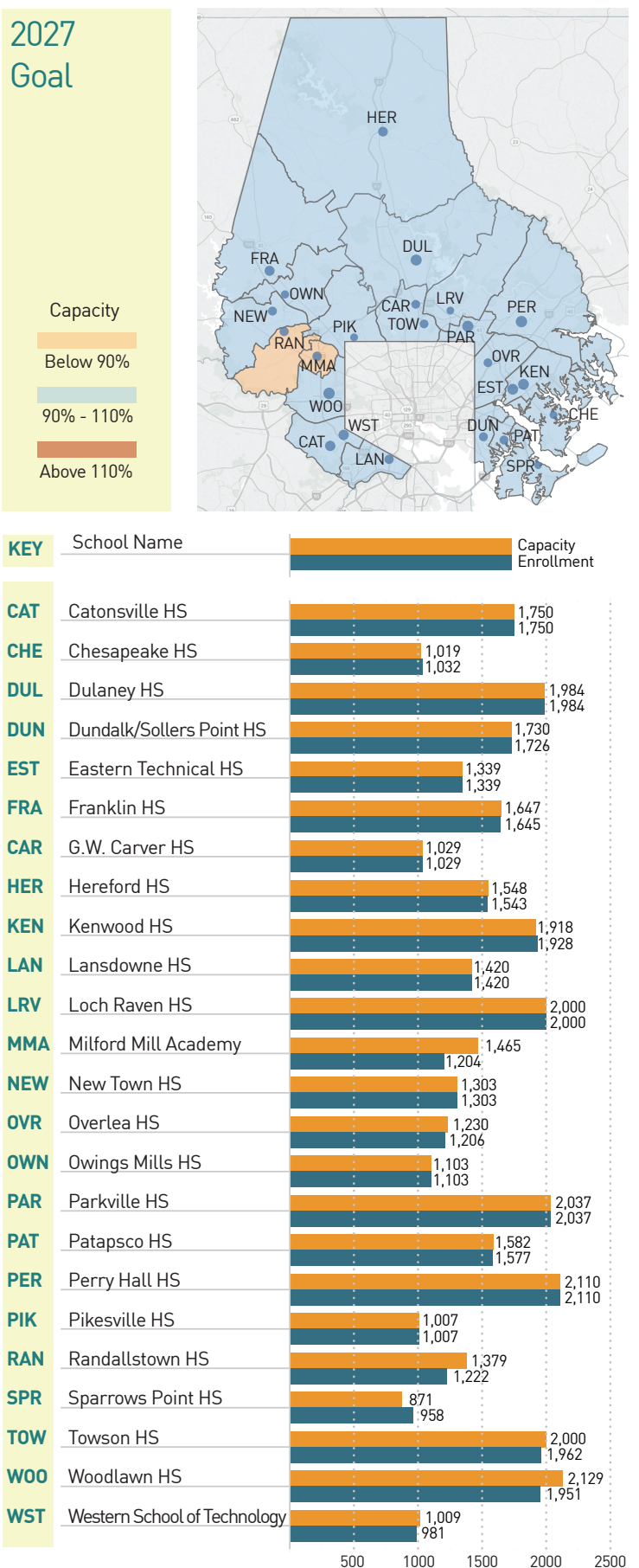
BEFORE:



SCENARIO 2 ACTION:



RESULT:



Scenario 3: Just Build It

The third scenario embraces a capital project-led approach. Rather than focusing on moving students toward existing or newly created capacity, it removes redistricting from computations altogether.

This scenario would include a school replacement that would also add to capacity:

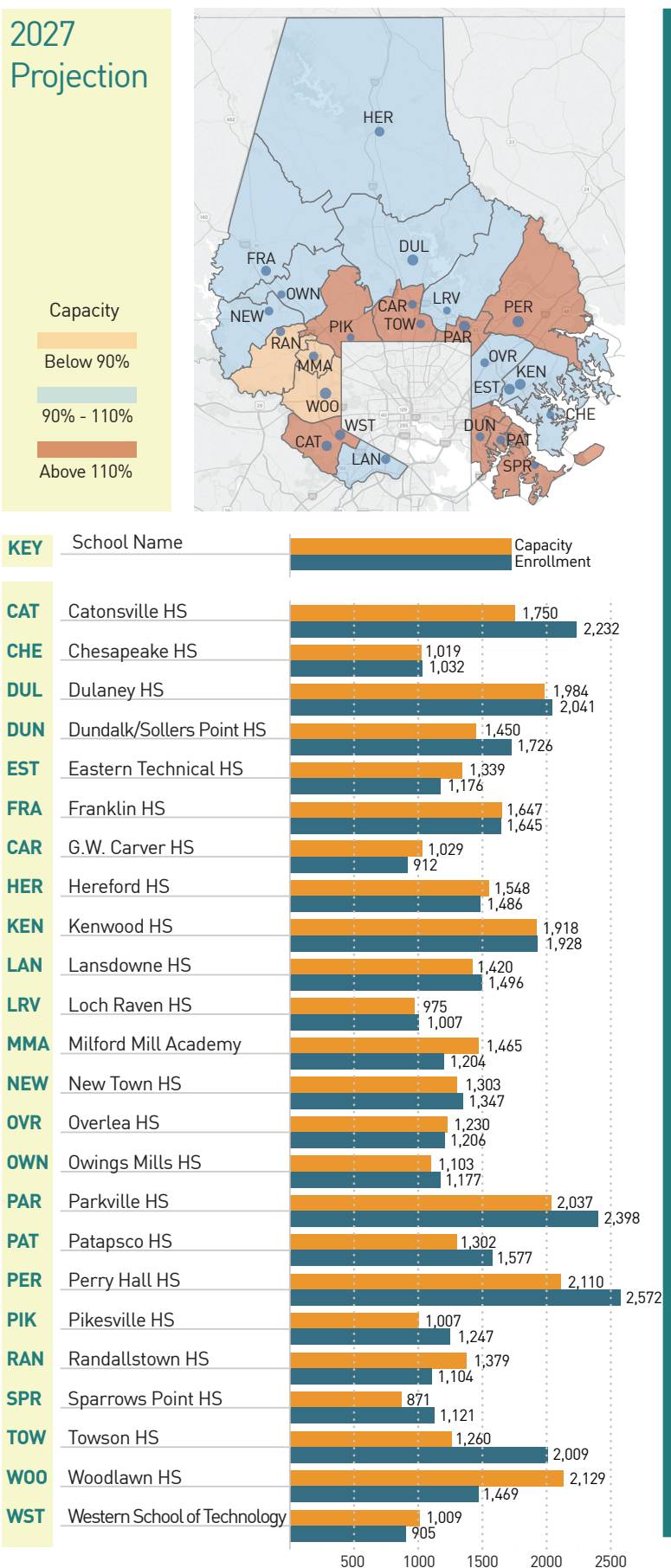
- 1) Towson High School (+740 seats)

The scenario would include seven additions to existing schools:

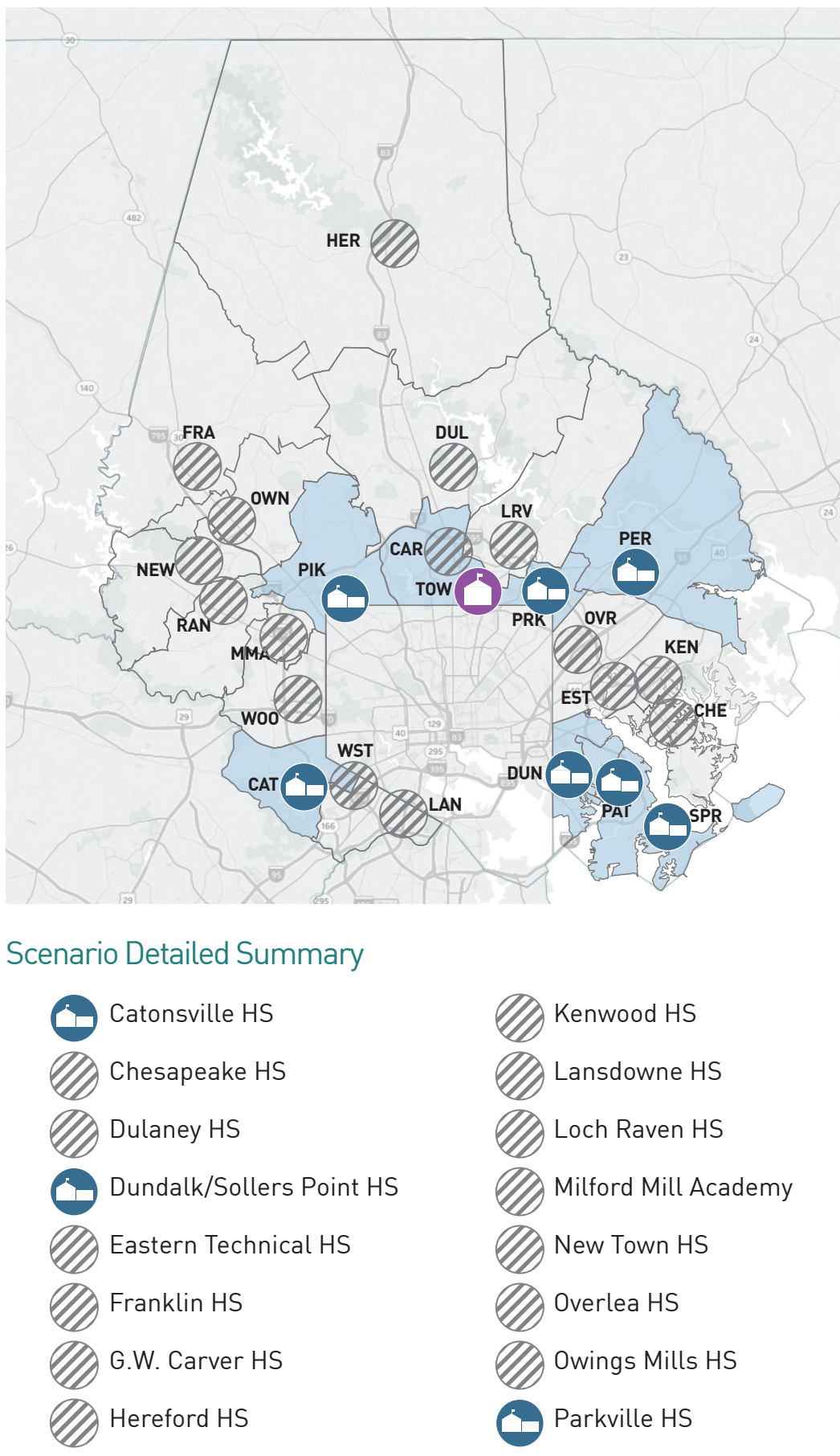
- 1) Catonsville High School (+500 seats)
- 2) Dundalk/Sollers Point High School (+300 seats)
- 3) Parkville High School (+360 seats)
- 4) Patapsco High School (+300 seats)
- 5) Perry Hall High School (+460 seats)
- 6) Pikesville High School (+240 seats)
- 7) Sparrows Point High School (+250 seats)

Because the scenario relies entirely on capital projects to solve the capacity problem, the associated costs are higher. The study team estimates the costs of the eight capital projects to be \$500 million. The scenario would add a total of 3,150 additional seats, with no additional seats added to existing magnet programs.

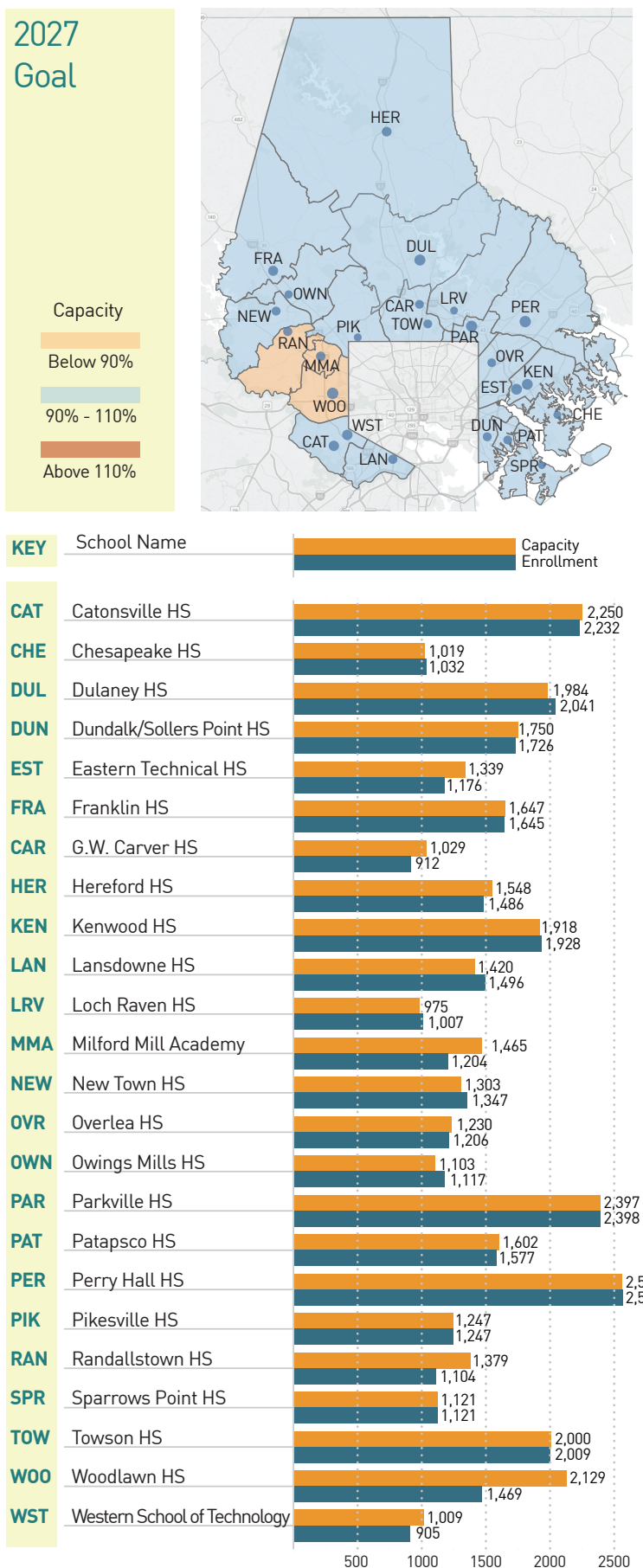
BEFORE:



SCENARIO 3 ACTION:



RESULT:



Scenario 4: Magnets on the Move

The fourth scenario utilized current magnet programs that exist in Baltimore County's high schools to balance enrollment and capacity. There are presently three pure magnet schools in BCPS: Western School of Technology, Eastern Technical High School, and the George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology. Eastern and Western would be expanded under this scenario along with Dundalk/Sollers Point. There are a number of magnet programs that exist outside of these three schools, to which students from any part of Baltimore County can apply. The focus of this scenario is shifting/relocating existing magnet programs to under-enrolled schools in an attempt to alleviate overcrowding while also utilizing available seats.

While many stakeholders expressed extreme dislike of involuntary movement, voluntary movement to a different school to attend a desirable magnet program is generally viewed with great favor. Stakeholders also indicated that the demand for BCPS magnet program seats significantly exceeds supply. That said, some stakeholders expressed concerns that magnet programs rely on voluntary movement to ease capacity constraints and are not guaranteed to succeed.

This scenario would include only one replacement school that would also be associated with significant capacity augmentation:

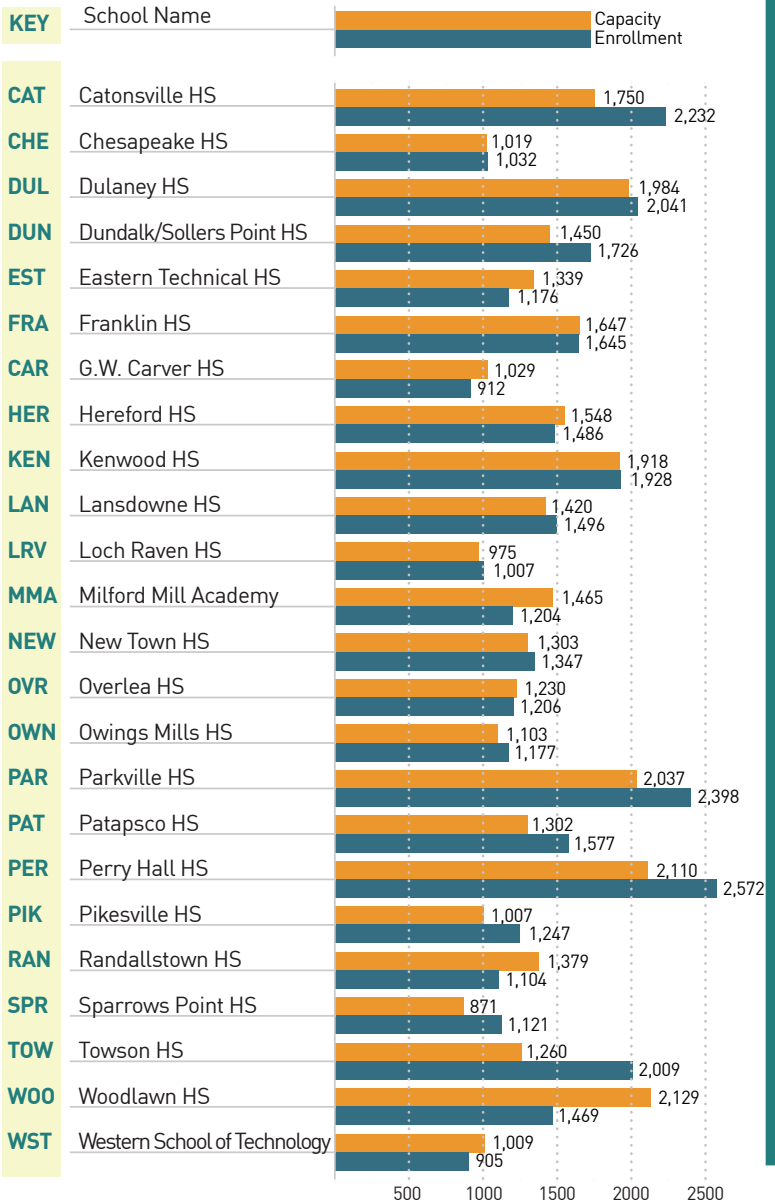
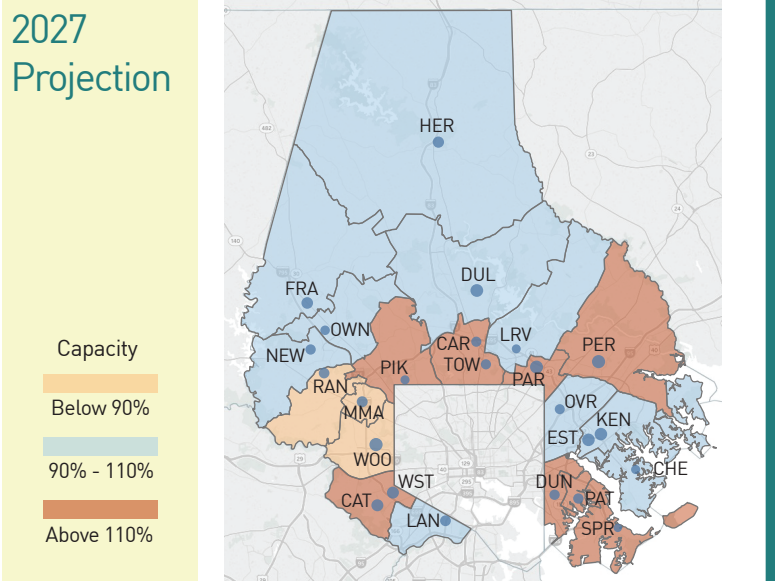
- 1) Towson High School (+740 seats).

This scenario would include three additions to existing schools:

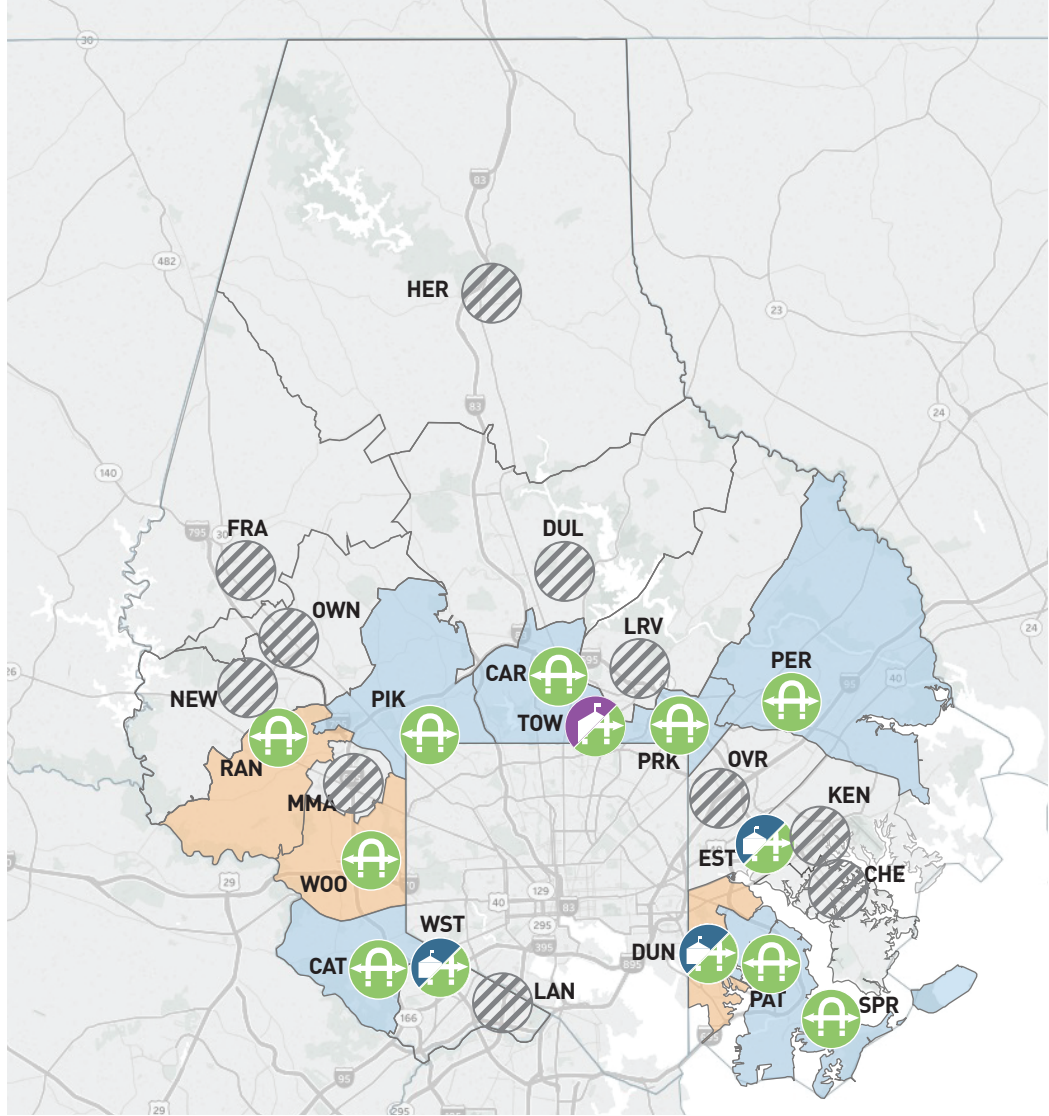
- 1) Dundalk/Sollers Point High School (+600 seats)
- 2) Eastern Technical High School (+500 seats)
- 3) Western School of Technology (+100 seats)

The total capital cost of the scenario is \$300 million, though it would also implicate significant increases in operational costs to support expanded magnet programming. This scenario would create an additional 2,050 seats, of which 700 would be in magnet programs. The scenario would relocate 2,376 students either through a boundary change process or a voluntary move to a magnet program.

BEFORE:



SCENARIO 4 ACTION:



Scenario Detailed Summary

- Catonsville HS

Chesapeake HS

Dulaney HS

Dundalk/Sollers Point HS

Eastern Technical HS

Franklin HS

G.W. Carver HS

Hereford HS

Kenwood HS

Lansdowne HS

Loch Raven HS

Milford Mill Academy

New Town HS

Overlea HS

Owings Mills HS

Parkville HS

Patapsco HS

Perry Hall HS

Pikesville HS

Randallstown HS

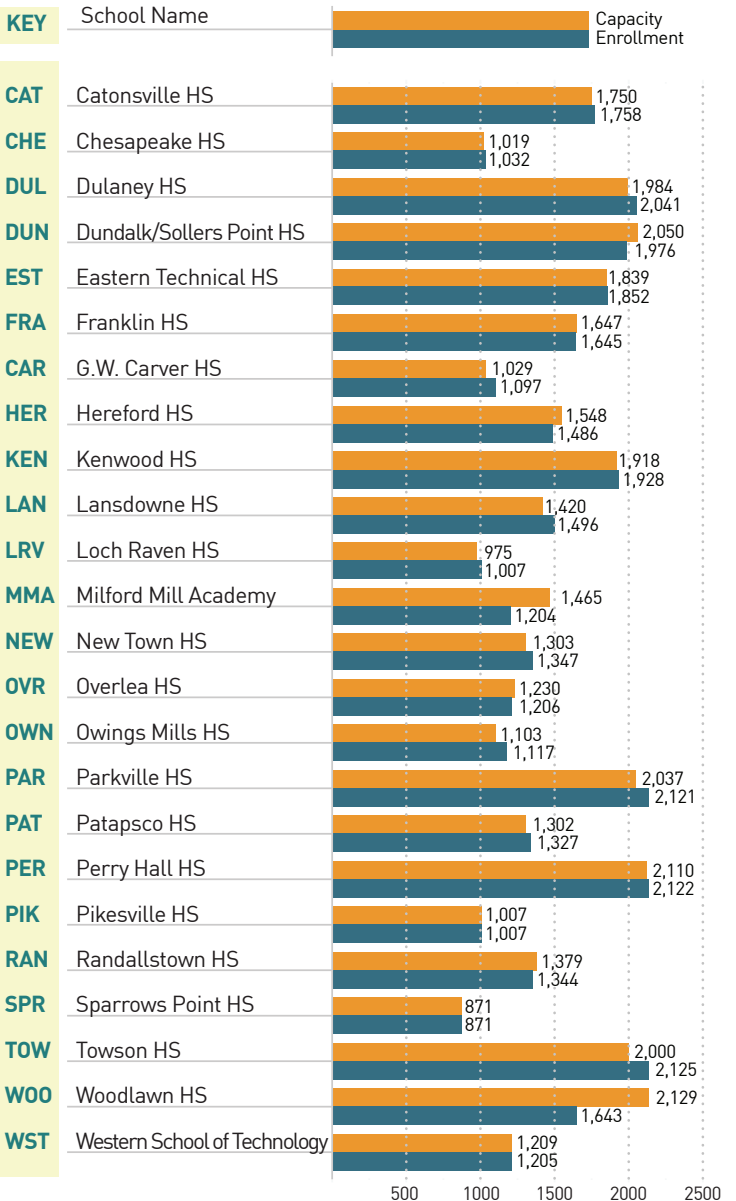
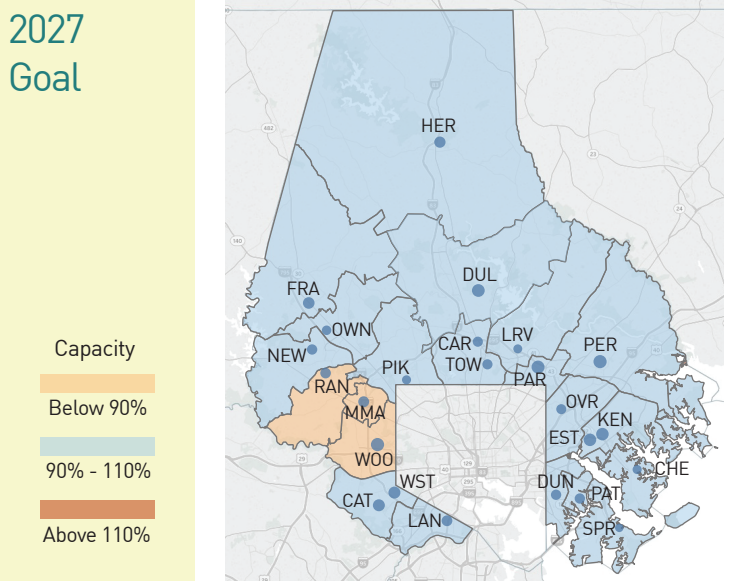
Sparrows Point HS

Towson HS

Western School of Technology

Woodlawn HS

RESULT:



Scenario 5: Toward “Optimal” School Size

There is a view that the largest a high school should be in terms of capacity and enrollment is 1,700 scholars. Accordingly, this scenario caps SRC at 1,700 students for all BCPS high schools presently at or below that level. Schools already larger than this threshold would remain that way.

Under this scenario, there are two school replacements:

- 1) Loch Raven High School (+715 seats)
- 2) Towson High School (+440 seats)

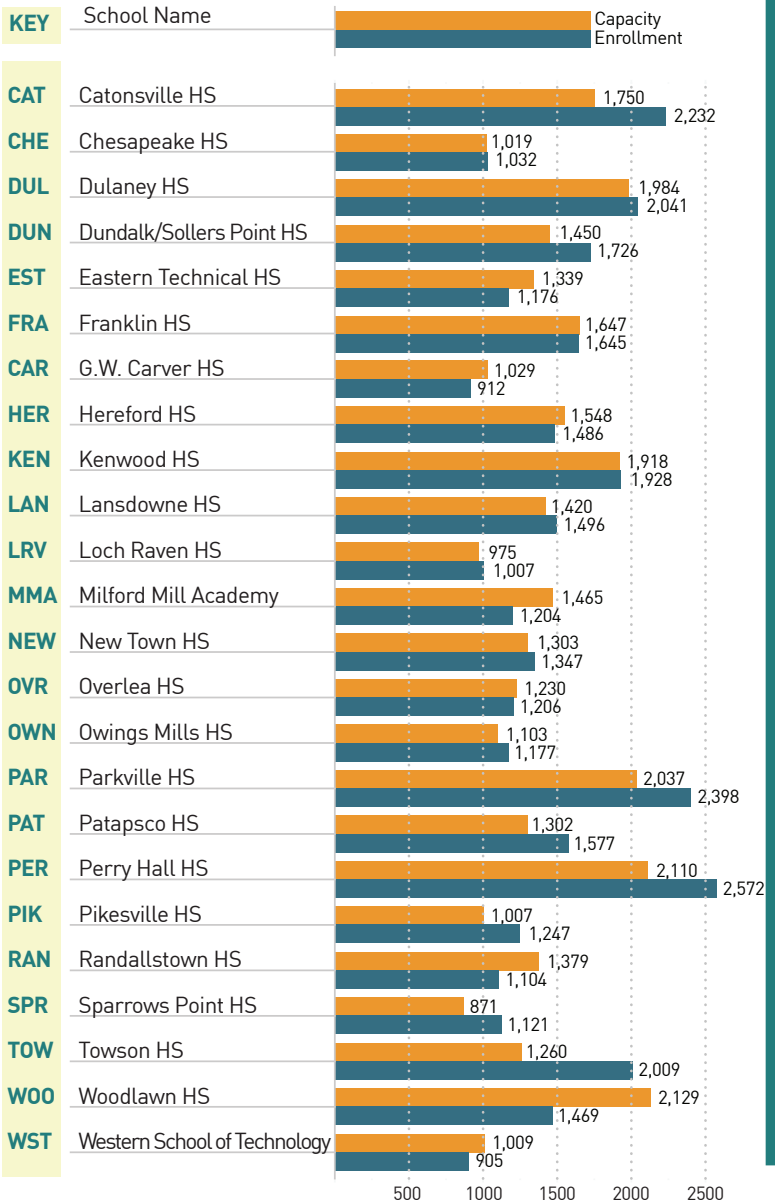
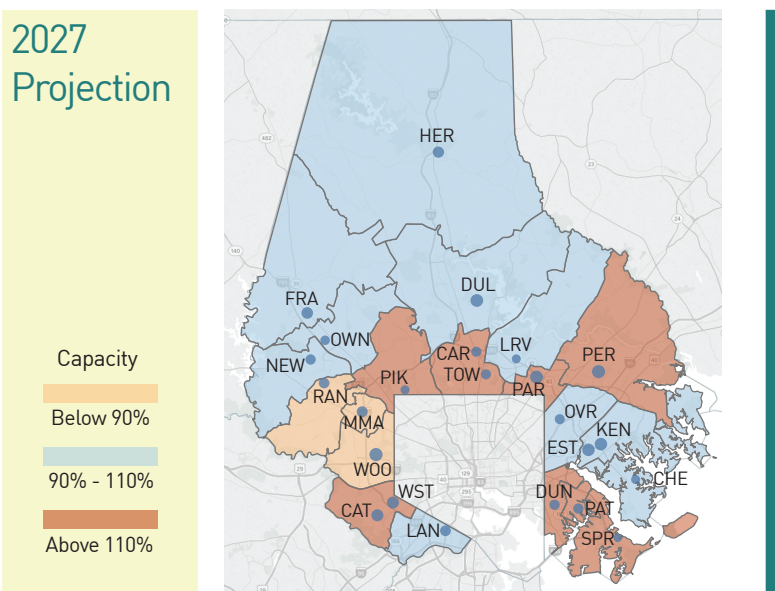
Maximum enrollment at these replacement schools would therefore be at or below the 1,700 student threshold.

There would be four additions to existing schools:

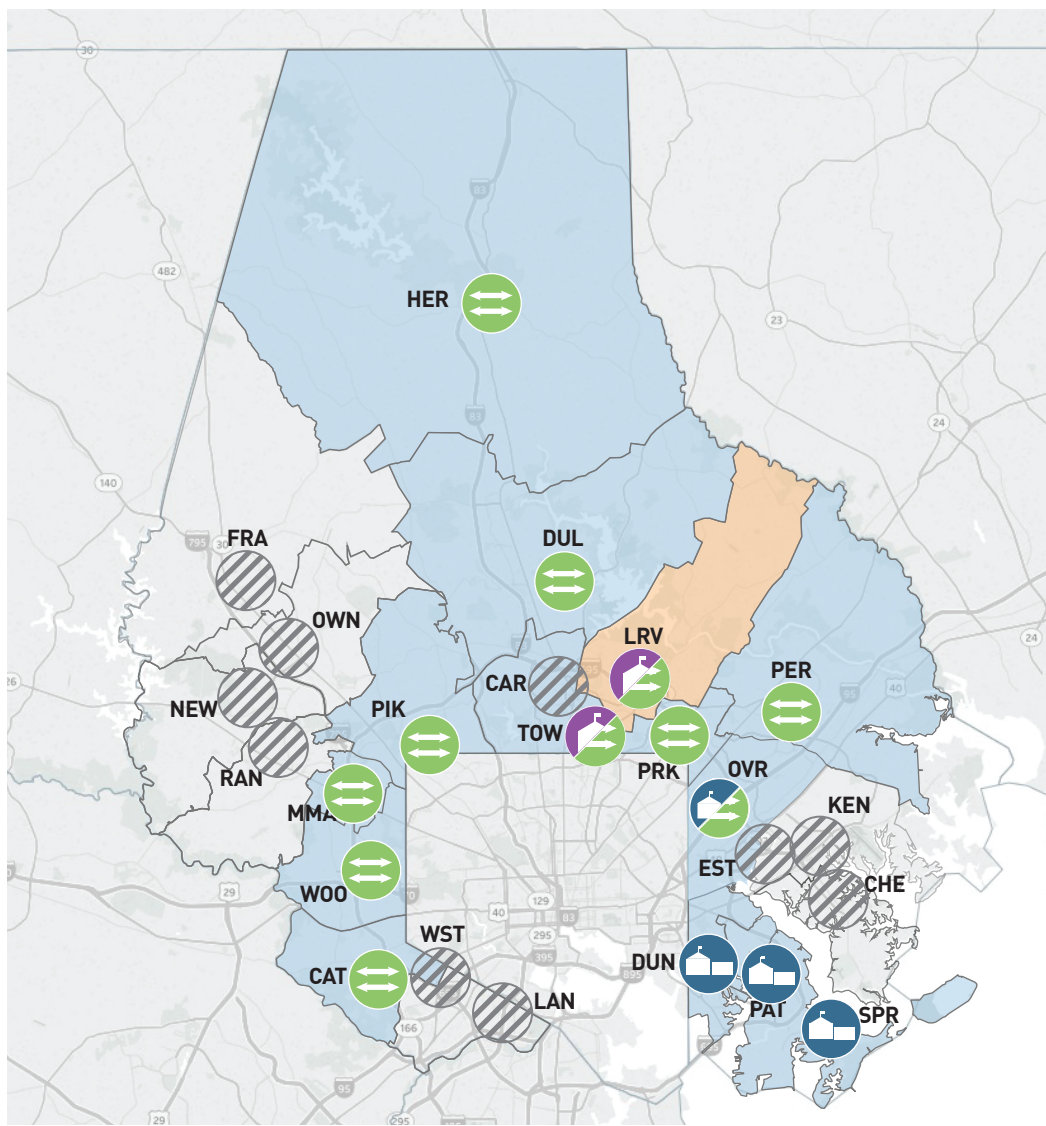
- 1) Dundalk/Sollers Point High School (+250 seats)
- 2) Overlea High School (+470 seats)
- 3) Patapsco High School (+300 seats)
- 4) Sparrows Point High School (+250 seats)

Capital costs would total \$375 million. Under this scenario, 2,425 additional seats would be added, none of which would be for magnet programs. Additionally, 1,953 students would be relocated via boundary changes.

BEFORE:



SCENARIO 5 ACTION:



Scenario Detailed Summary

- ↔

 Catonsville HS
- ↔

 Dulaney HS
- 🏠

 Dundalk/Sollers Point HS
- ↔

 Eastern Technical HS
- ↔

 Franklin HS
- ↔

 G.W. Carver HS
- ↔

 Hereford HS
- 🏠

 Kenwood HS
- 🏠

 Lansdowne HS
- ↔

 Loch Raven HS
- ↔

 Milford Mill Academy
- 🏠

 New Town HS
- ↔

 Overlea HS
- 🏠

 Owings Mills HS
- ↔

 Parkville HS
- 🏠

 Patapsco HS
- ↔

 Perry Hall HS
- ↔

 Pikesville HS
- 🏠

 Randallstown HS
- 🏠

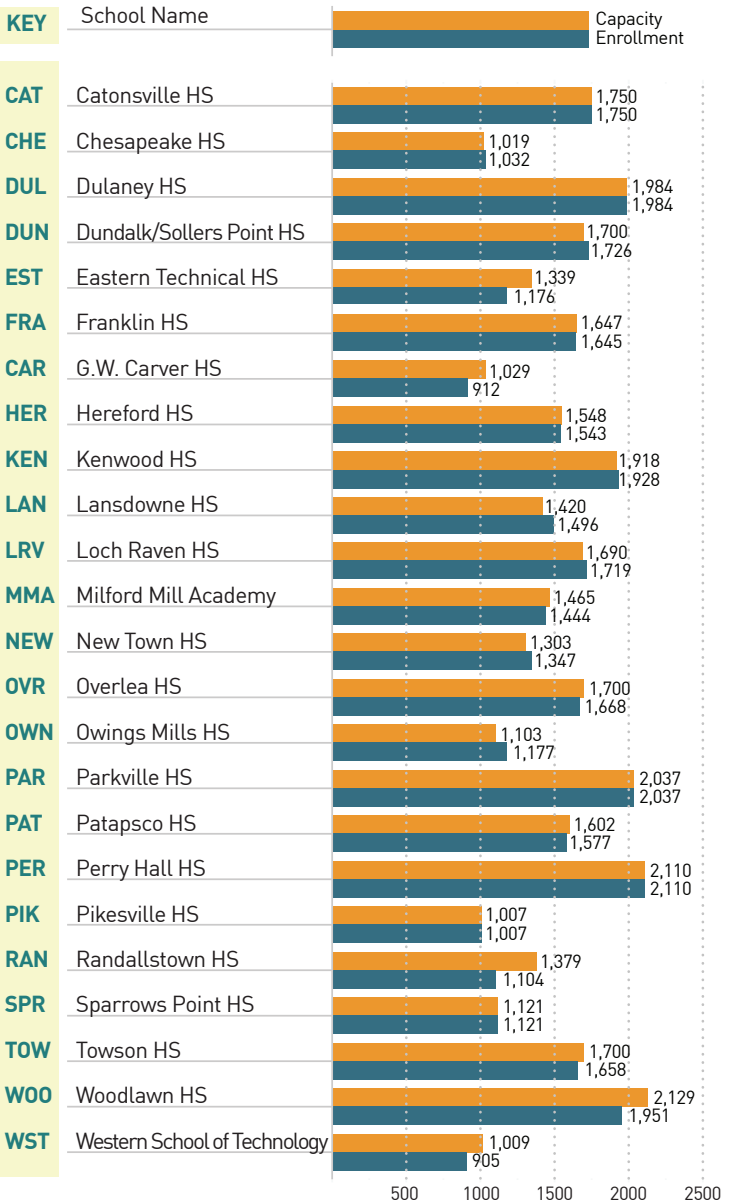
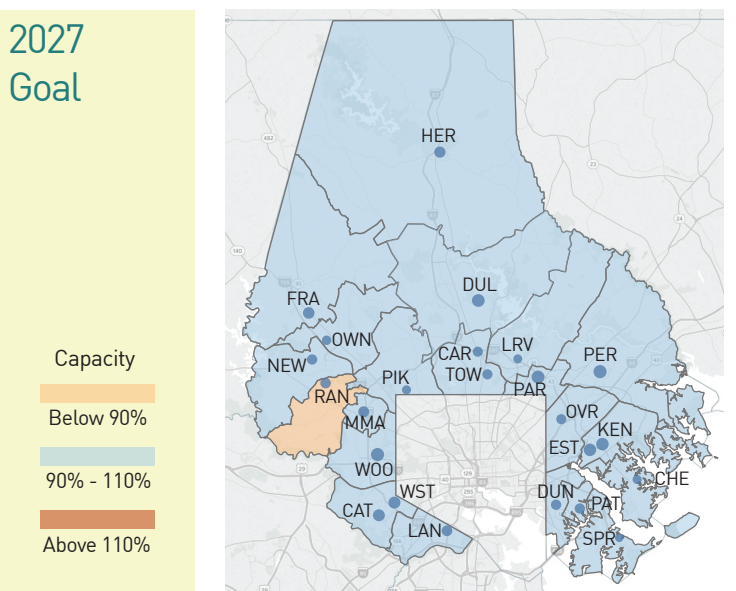
 Sparrows Point HS
- ↔

 Towson HS
- 🏠

 Western School of Technology
- ↔

 Woodlawn HS

RESULT:



Scenario 6: Building Magnets

This scenario is very similar to the previous “Magnets on the Move” scenario in that it also focuses on using magnets to balance enrollment and capacity. However, rather than moving around existing magnet programs, this scenario focuses on creating new ones. This would help solve the equitable access problem that stakeholders repeatedly brought up during focus groups and gallery walks.

Under this scenario, there would be one replacement school that would be substantially larger than the existing academy:

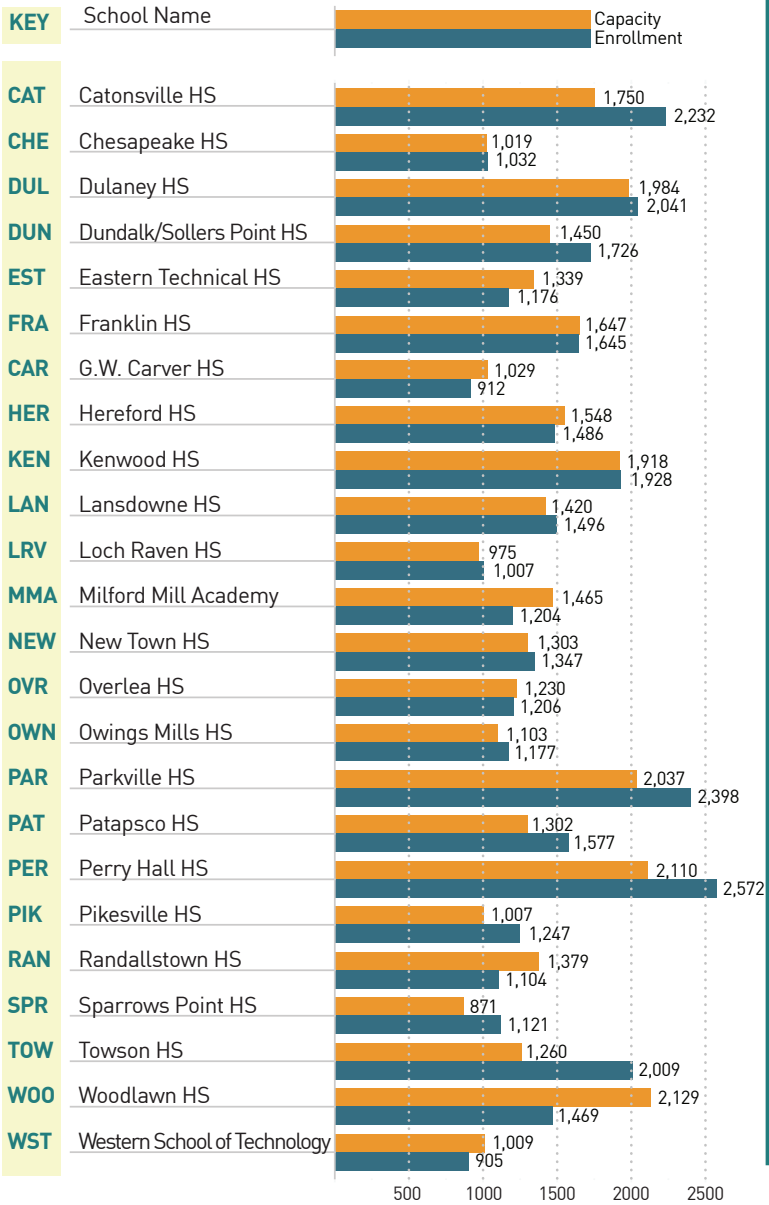
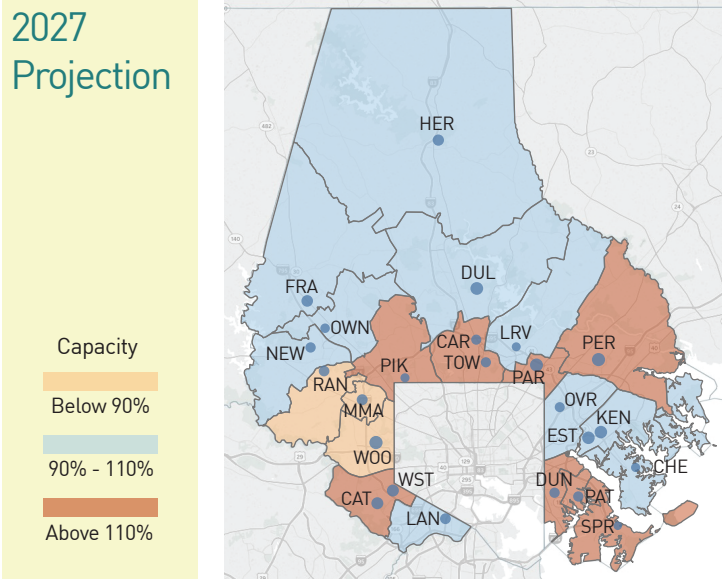
- 1) Towson High School (+740 seats)

This scenario would include three additions to existing schools:

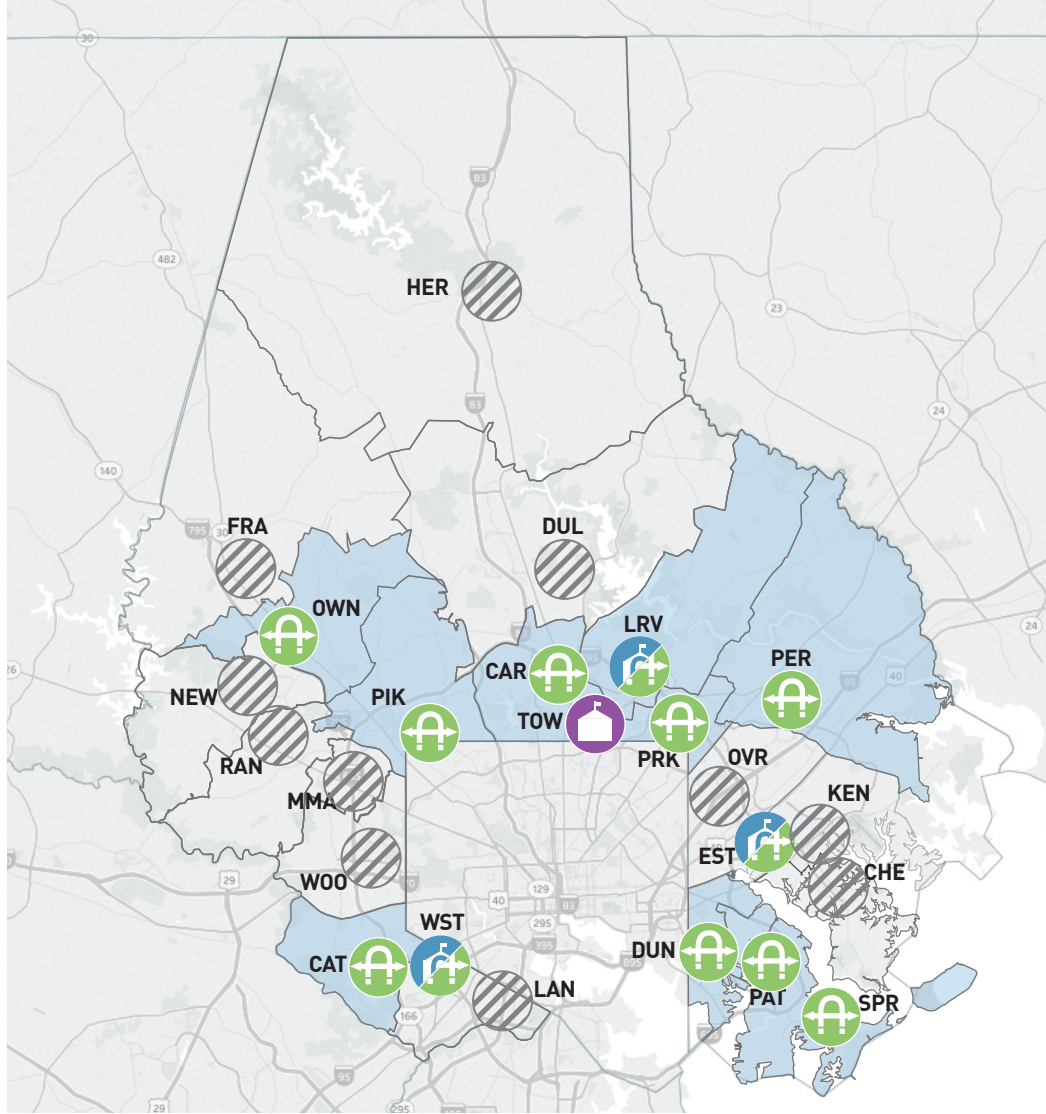
- 1) Eastern Technical High School (+661 seats)
- 2) Loch Raven High School (+1,025 seats)
- 3) Western School of Technology (+500 seats)

Associated capital costs would total \$500 million. Operating costs would rise significantly. This is an expensive scenario. This scenario would create an additional 2,926 seats, of which 2,186 would be in magnet programs. After intervention, 2,490 students would be relocated either through boundary changes or voluntary movement to a magnet program.

BEFORE:



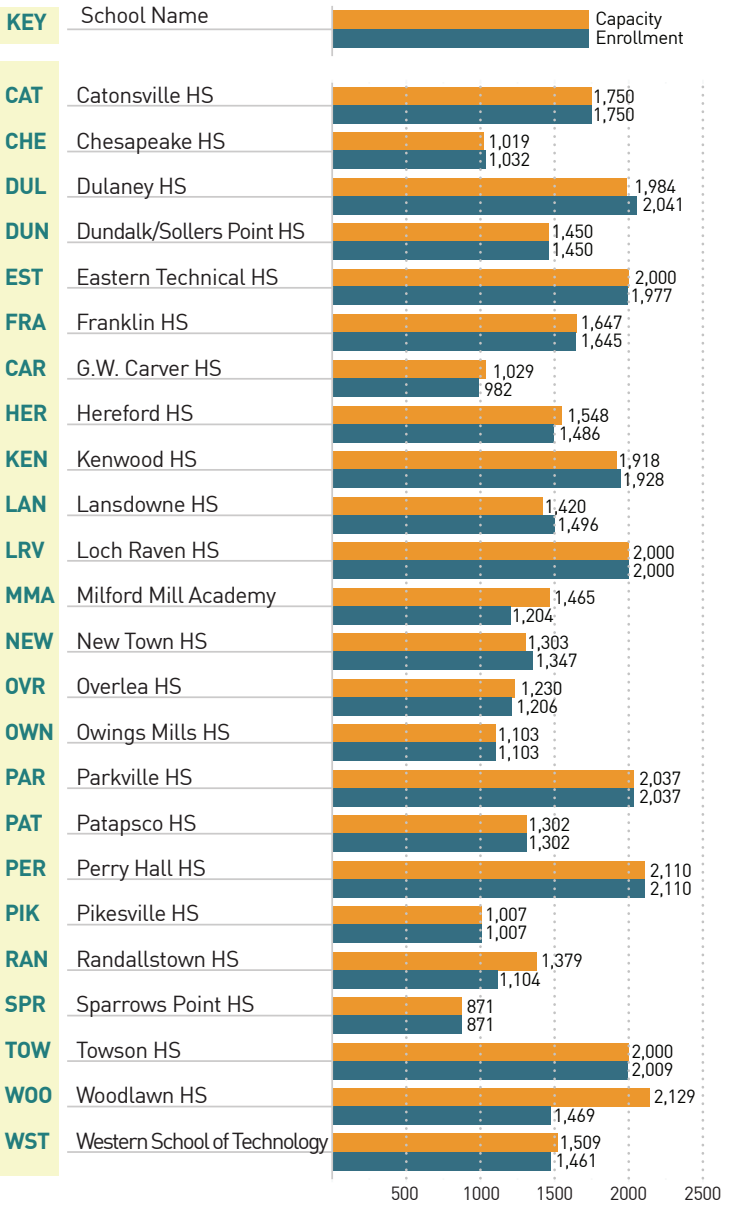
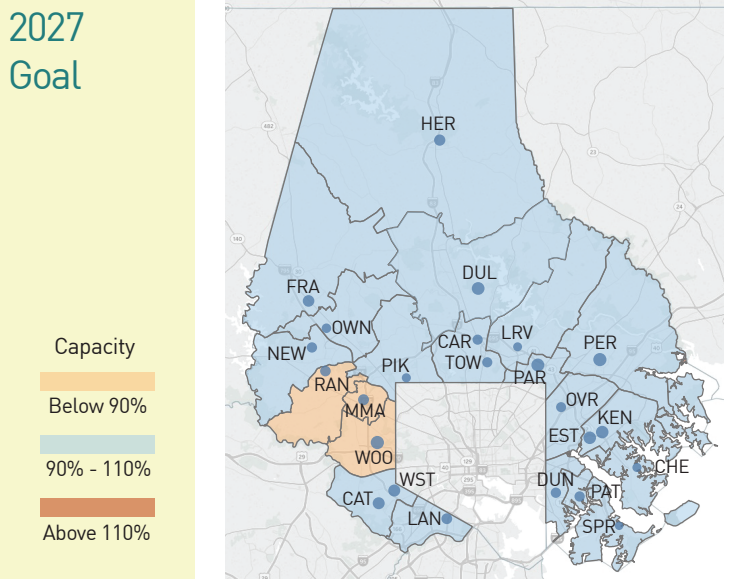
SCENARIO 6 ACTION:



Scenario Detailed Summary

- Catonsville HS
- Chesapeake HS
- Dulaney HS
- Dundalk/Sollers Point HS
- Eastern Technical HS
- Franklin HS
- G.W. Carver HS
- Hereford HS
- Kenwood HS
- Lansdowne HS
- Loch Raven HS
- Milford Mill Academy
- New Town HS
- Overlea HS
- Owings Mills HS
- Parkville HS
- Patapsco HS
- Perry Hall HS
- Pikesville HS
- Randallstown HS
- Sparrows Point HS
- Towson HS
- Western School of Technology
- Woodlawn HS

RESULT:



Scenario 7: The FY2019 Capital Plan (Sort of)

The last scenario takes into account the Capital Plan for Fiscal Year 2019. Rather than minimizing costs, or keeping the amount of redistricting low, this scenario prioritizes certain commitments made in a recent capital plan. As a result, some of the capital projects are in schools where there isn't necessarily a capacity issue.

Under this scenario, there are four replacement schools that result in enhanced capacity:

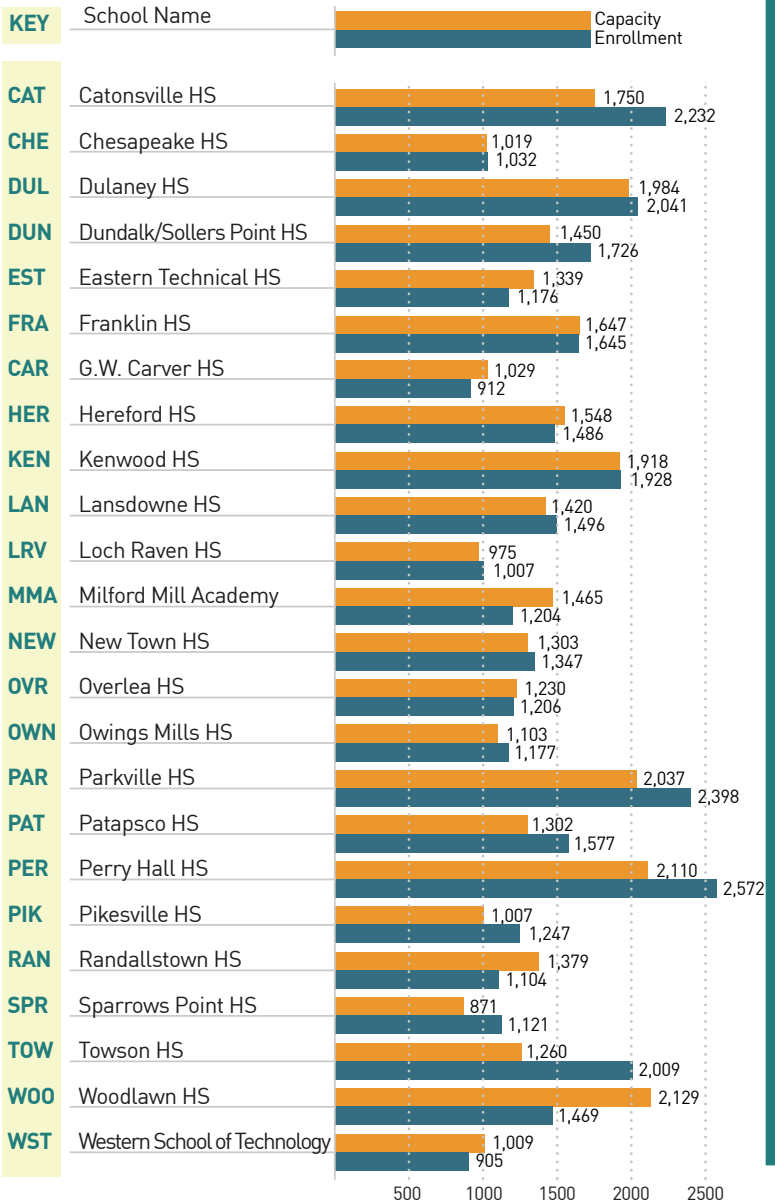
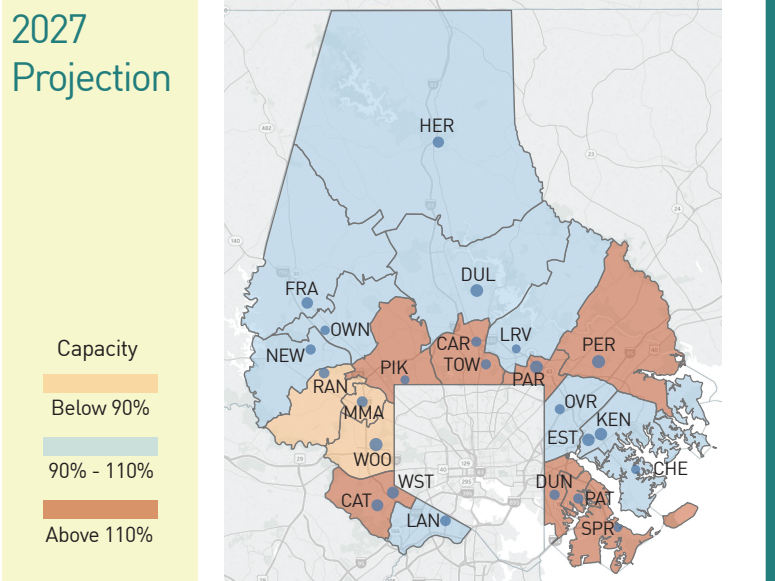
- 1) Dulaney High School (+316 seats)
- 2) Lansdown High School (+580 seats)
- 3) Loch Raven High School (+825 seats)
- 4) Towson High School (+740 seats)

The scenario also includes 2 additions to existing schools:

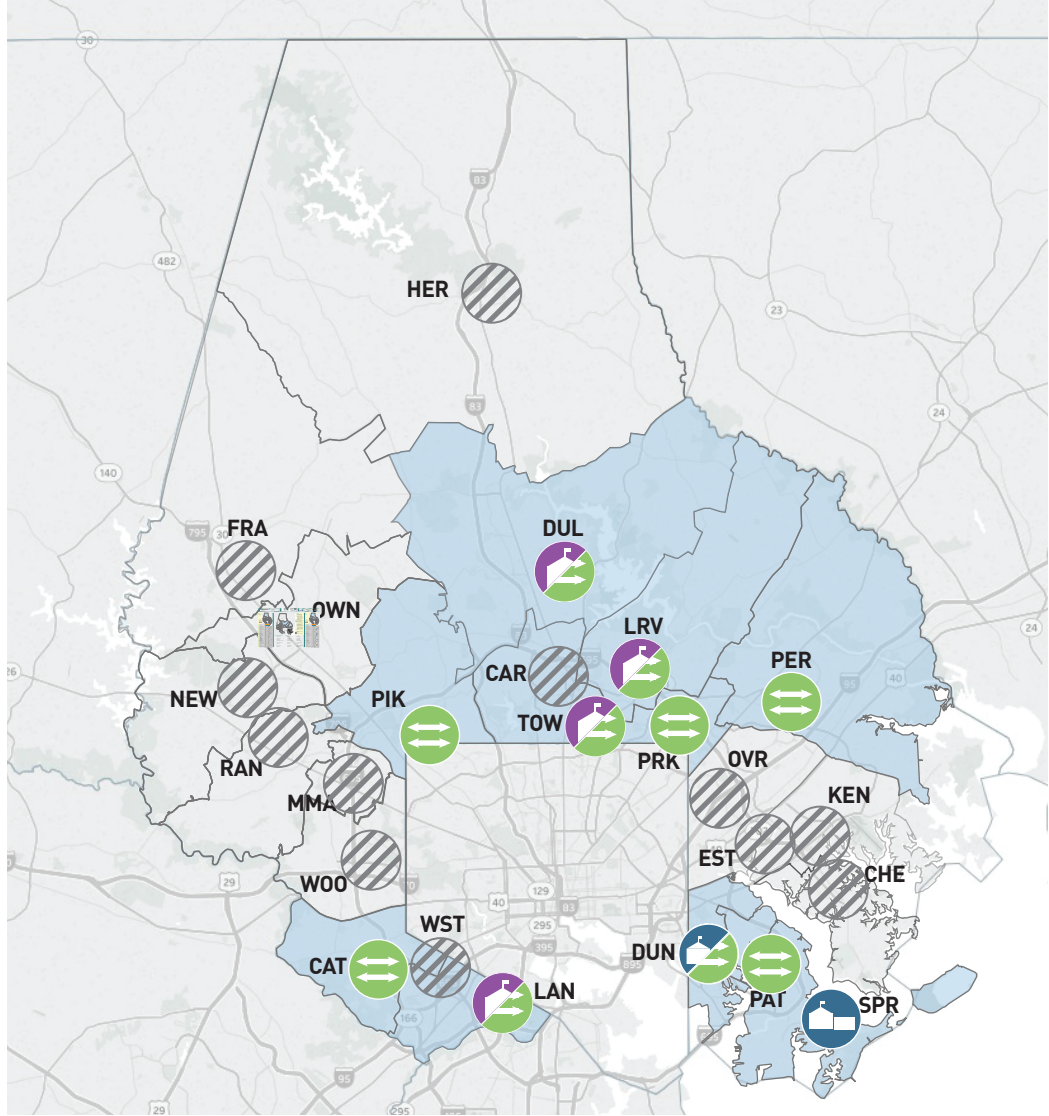
- 1) Dundalk/Sollers Point High School (+600 seats)
- 2) Sparrows Point High School (+250 seats)

Capital costs for these six projects total \$617 million. This is another expensive scenario, not altogether surprising given the presence of projects that do not address especially pressing capacity concerns. The scenario would add an additional 3,311 seats and would relocate 2,027 students. Because no additional seats are added to magnet programs, all relocations would be via boundary changes.

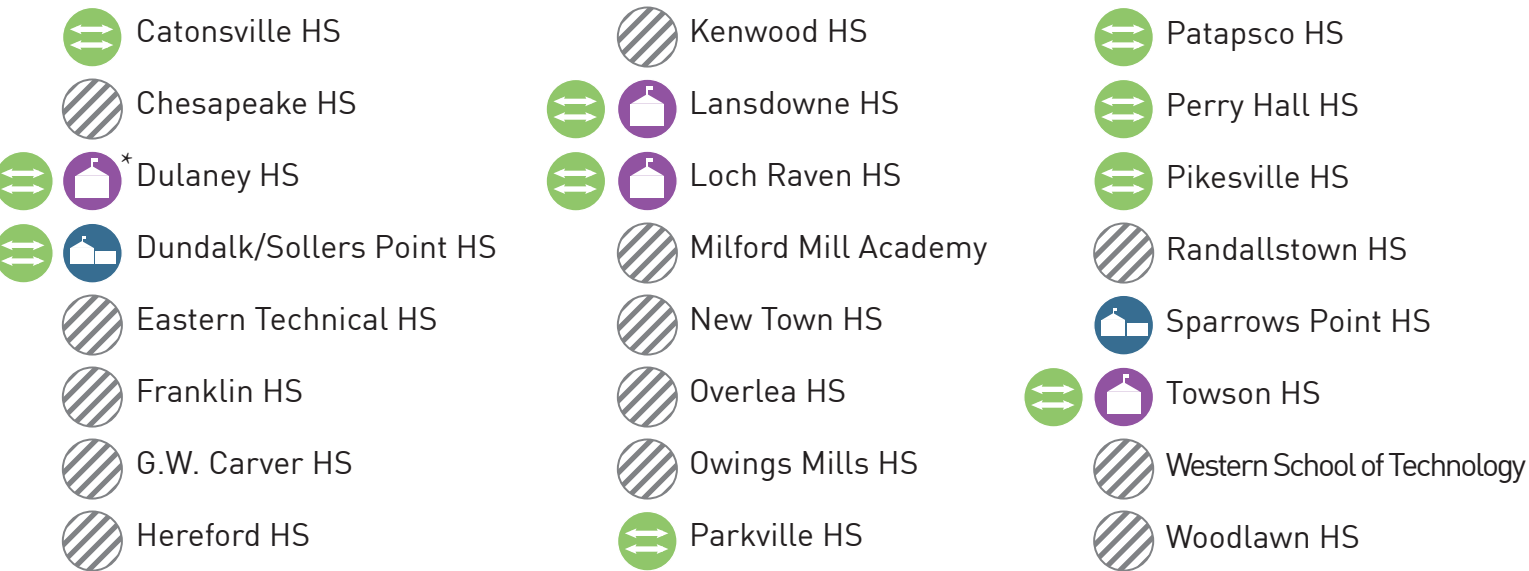
BEFORE:



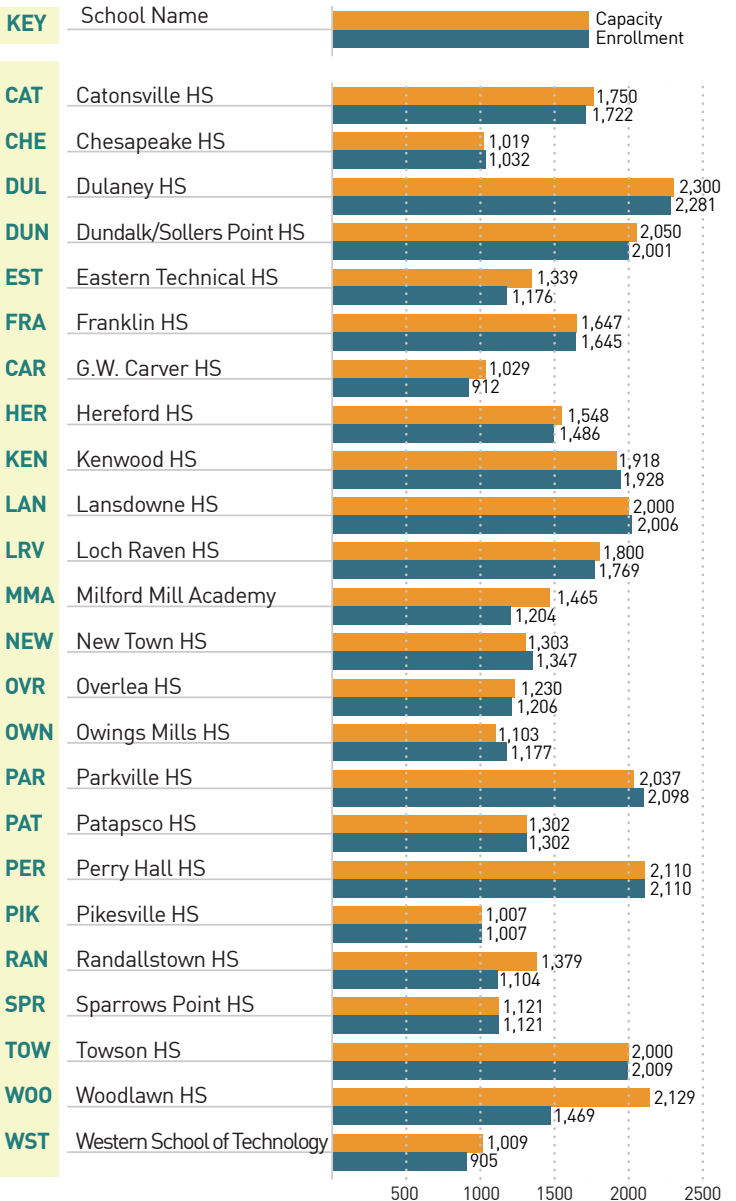
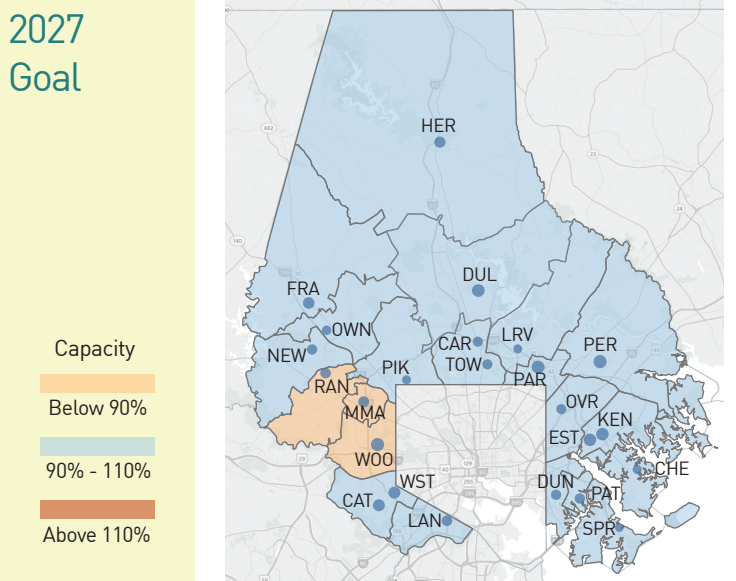
SCENARIO 7 ACTION:

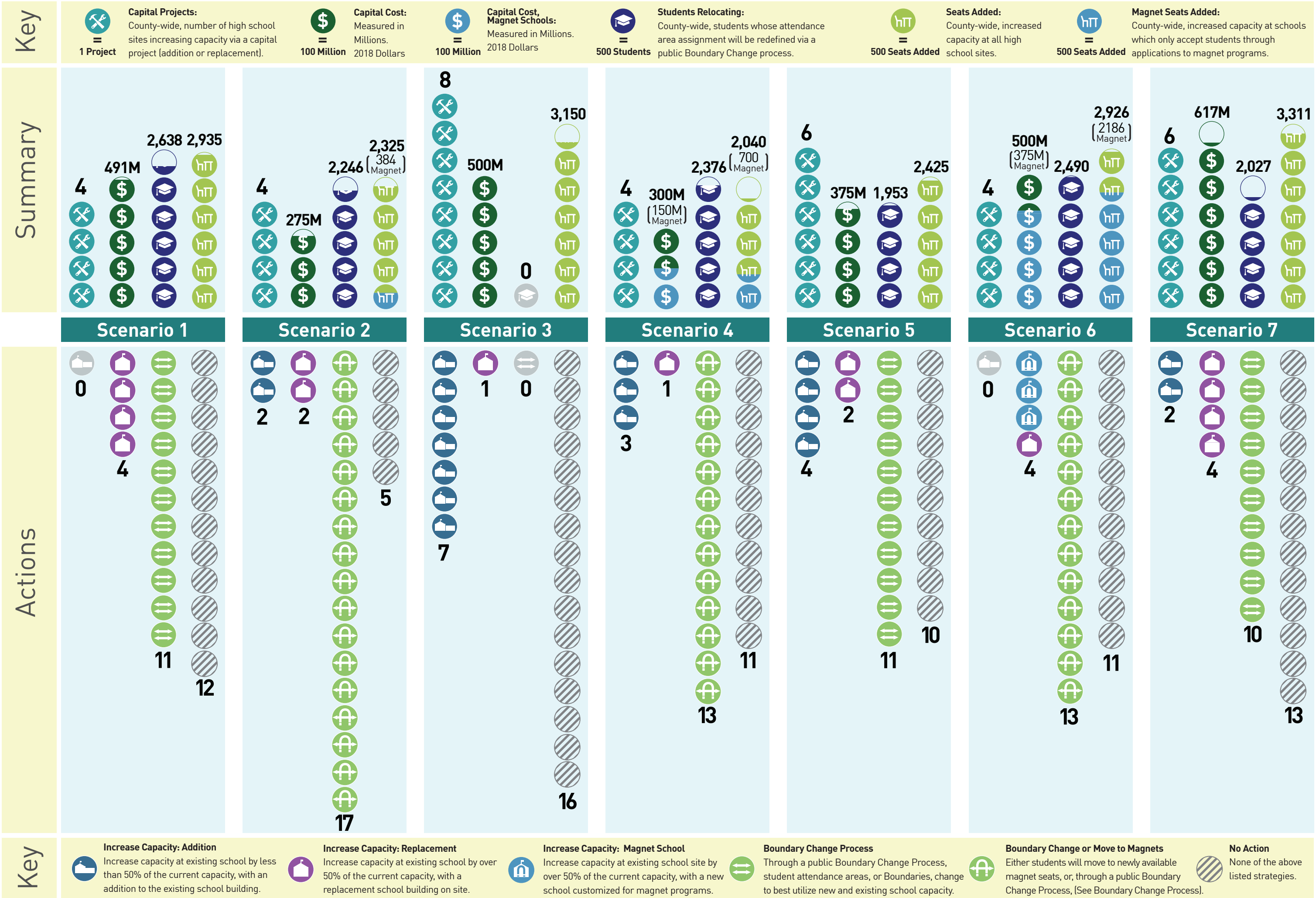


Scenario Detailed Summary



RESULT:





The Initial Survey

BCPS working alongside Sage first made the survey available to families, students, residents, teachers, administrators and other stakeholders on July 9, 2018. This aligned with the first gallery walk, which transpired at Catonsville High School that evening.

Results

Exhibit 9 supplies summary details regarding the volume of survey responses. In total, approximately 3,350 people responded to the survey. Exhibit 10 supplies a breakdown of response totals by school area. Among respondents, a plurality (26.8%) identified themselves as parents or relatives of a BCPS student followed closely by neighborhood residents (25.4%).

Exhibit 9. Geographic Breakdown of Survey Respondents

Region	Responses	% of Total
Central	1,068	31.9%
Northeast	721	21.5%
Northwest	231	6.9%
Southeast	197	5.9%
Southwest	1,123	33.5%
Other	12	0.4%
Total	3,352	100.0%

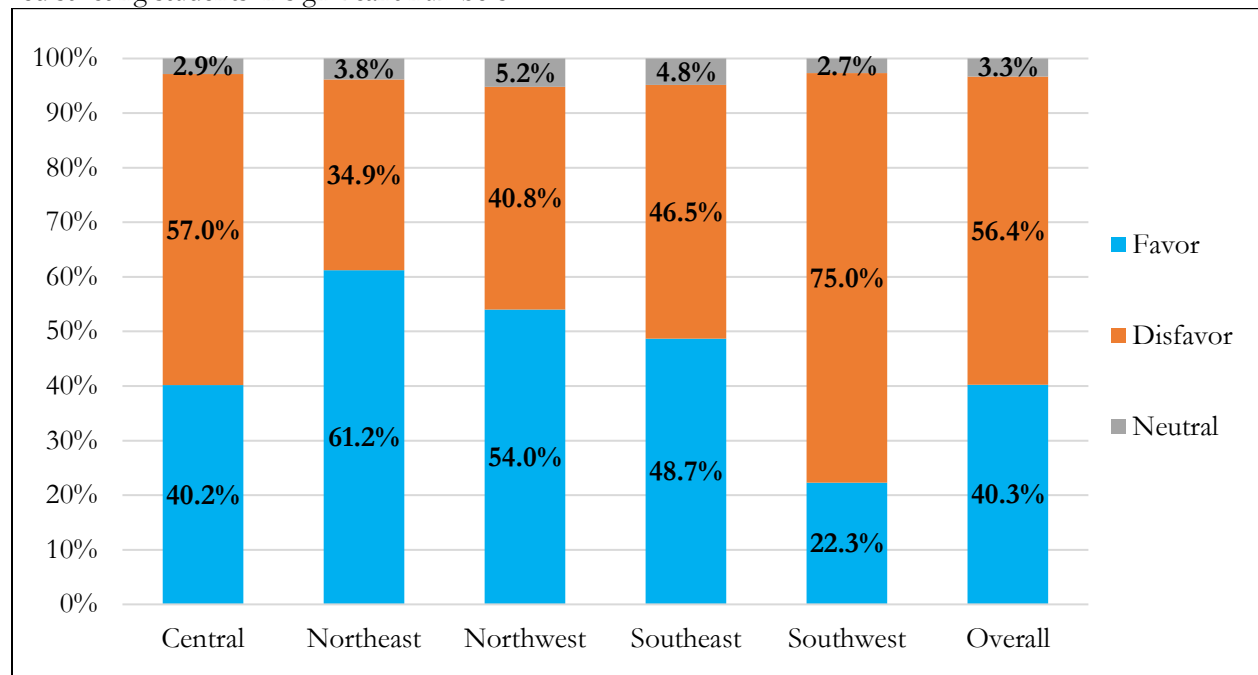
Exhibit 10. Reported Relationship of Survey Respondents

Relationship w/ BCPS	Responses	% of Total
Current student	267	4.8%
Parent/relative	1,495	26.8%
Relative prospective	1,037	18.6%
Alumni	416	7.4%
Live neighborhood	1,420	25.4%
Volunteer	180	3.2%
Interested	486	8.7%
Other	285	5.1%
Total	5,586	100.0%

Question 1: Should BCPS use all seats at schools that have surplus capacity, even if it means redistricting students in significant numbers?

The majority of survey respondents (56.4%) were not in favor of using all available seats to deal with capacity issues if it would result in redistricting students in substantial numbers. This was especially true in the Central (57.0%) and Southwest (75.0%) regions. By contrast, stakeholders from the Northeast (61.2%) and Northwest (54.0%) demonstrated greater support for widespread redistricting. Stakeholders from the Southeast region were most evenly divided, with 46.5% in favor of using all seats, with 48.7% opposed.

Exhibit 11. Question 1: “BCPS should use all seats at schools that have surplus capacity, even if it means redistricting students in significant numbers.”



Favor = “Strongly Agree” + “Somewhat Agree”

Disfavor = “Strongly Disagree” + “Somewhat Disagree”

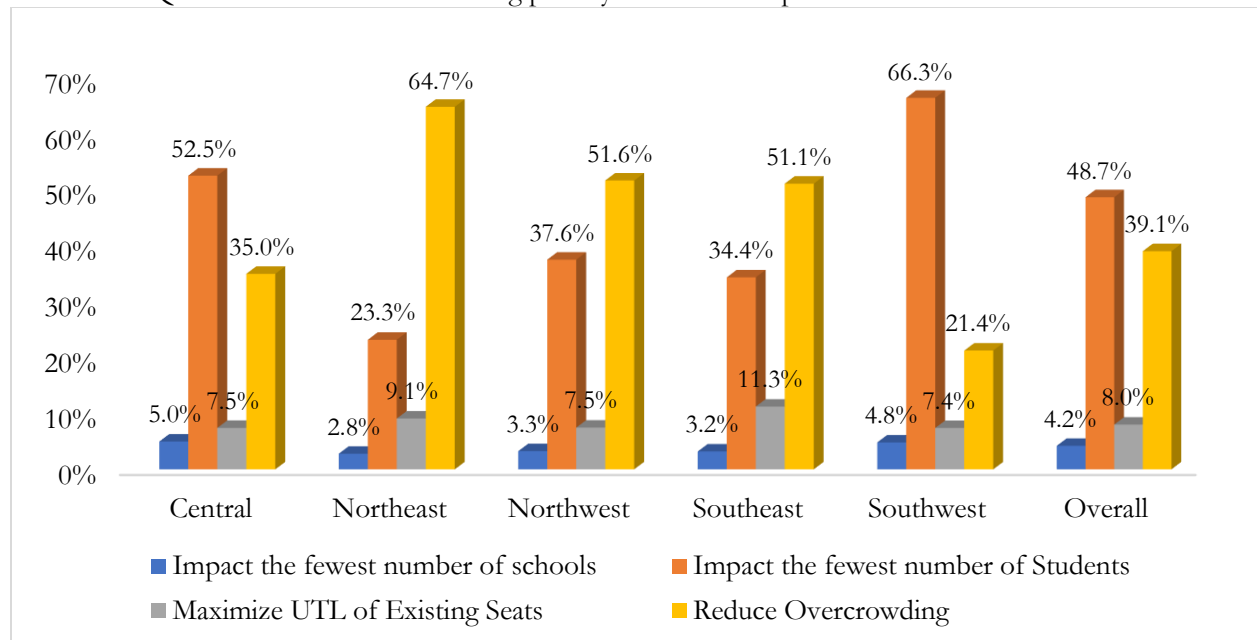
Neutral = “No Opinion”

Question 2: Which redistricting priority is the most important?

In the event of redistricting, stakeholders across all regions indicated that their top priorities involved impacting the fewest number of students while simultaneously addressing overcrowding. Nearly 49 percent of respondents indicated that the goal should be to impact the fewest number of students through redistricting, while about 39 percent indicated that reducing overcrowding should be the system's top priority.

Results differed markedly by school area, with those in the Northeast, Southeast, and Northwest collectively indicating that their top priority is to reduce overcrowding. In the Northeast, nearly two in three respondents stated that relieving overcrowding was their top priority in the context of redistricting.

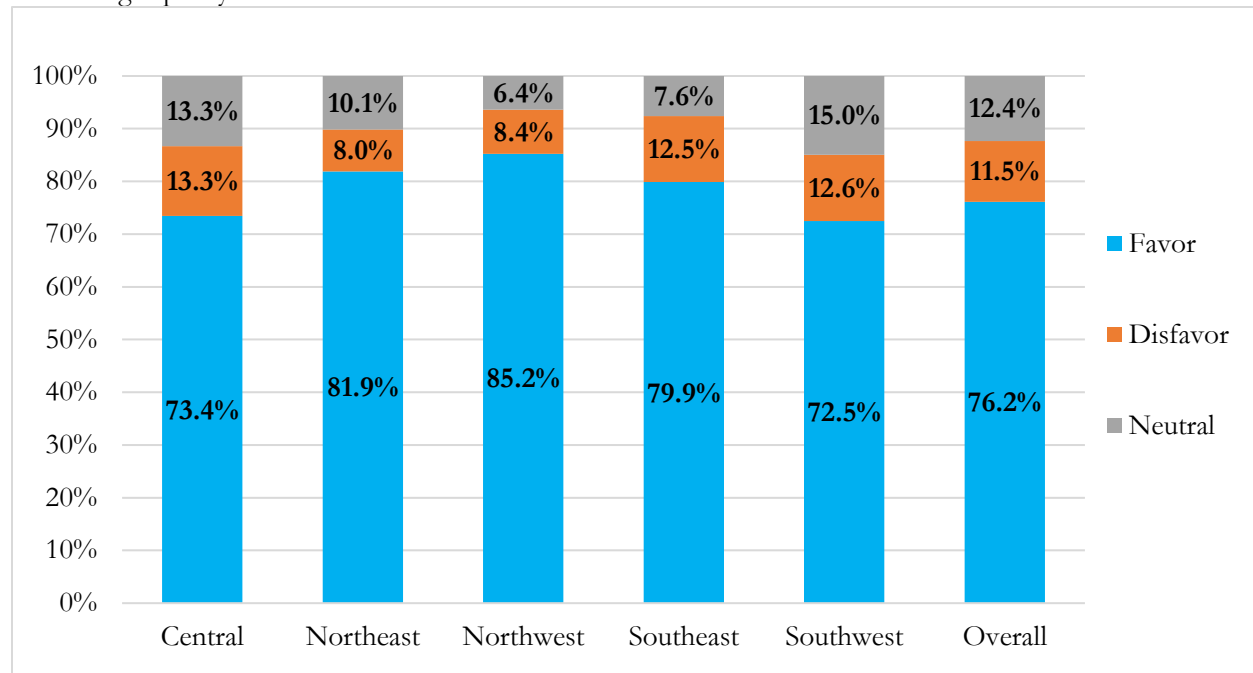
Exhibit 12. Question 2: "Which redistricting priority is the most important?"



Question 3: Should BCPS consider program placement when considering strategies to address capacity issues?

The vast majority of respondents (76.2%) supported considering program placement in creating strategies to address capacity issues, whether magnet or other programs. In each region, more than 70 percent of respondents are in favor of this approach to help manage BCPS capacity issues.

Exhibit 13. Question 3: “Should BCPS consider program placement when considering strategies for addressing capacity issues?”



Favor = “Strongly Agree” + “Somewhat Agree”

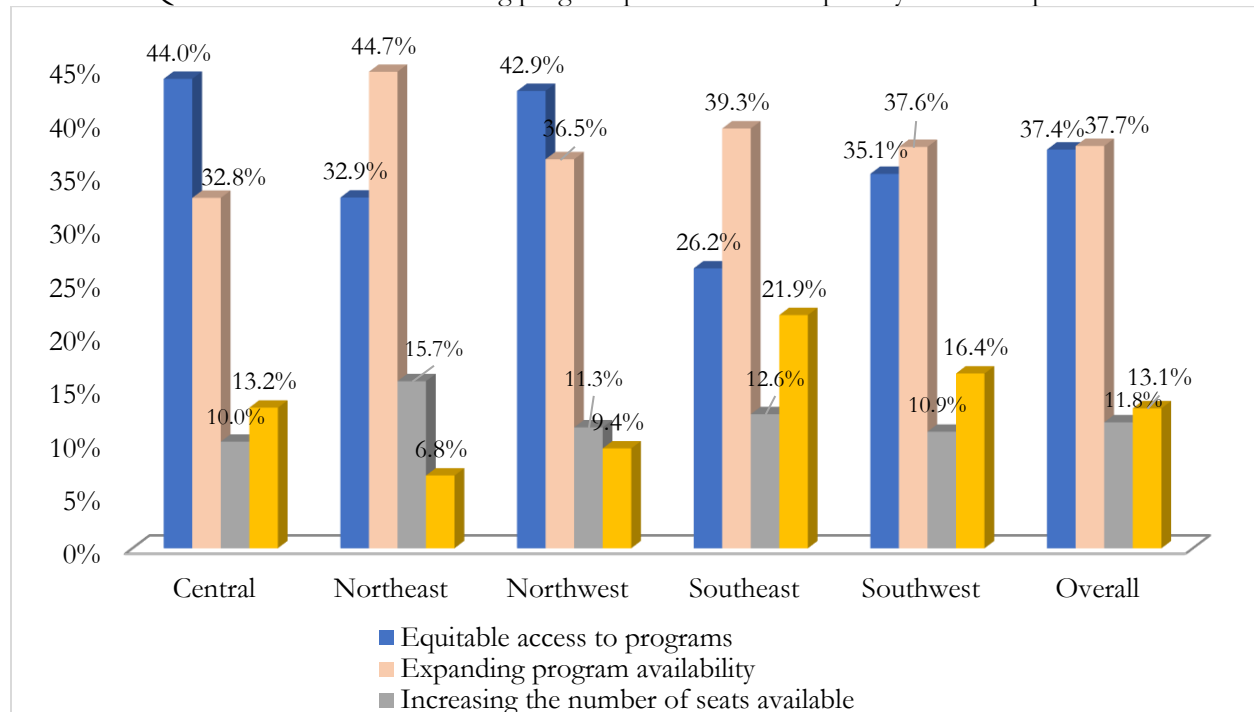
Disfavor = “Strongly Disagree” + “Somewhat Disagree”

Neutral = “No Opinion”

Question 4: When considering program placement, which priority is most important?

When considering program placement, top priorities for respondents include expanding program availability (37.7% marked as their top priority) and equitable access to programs (37.4% marked as the top priority). Respondents in the Central and Northwest regions prioritize equitable access to programs over expanding program availability. Respondents in the Northeast, Southeast, and Southwest prioritize expanding program availability over equitable access. Compared to other regions, maintaining current program locations appears to be particularly important to respondents in the Southeast (21.9% marked as top priority in Southeast compared to 13.1% overall).

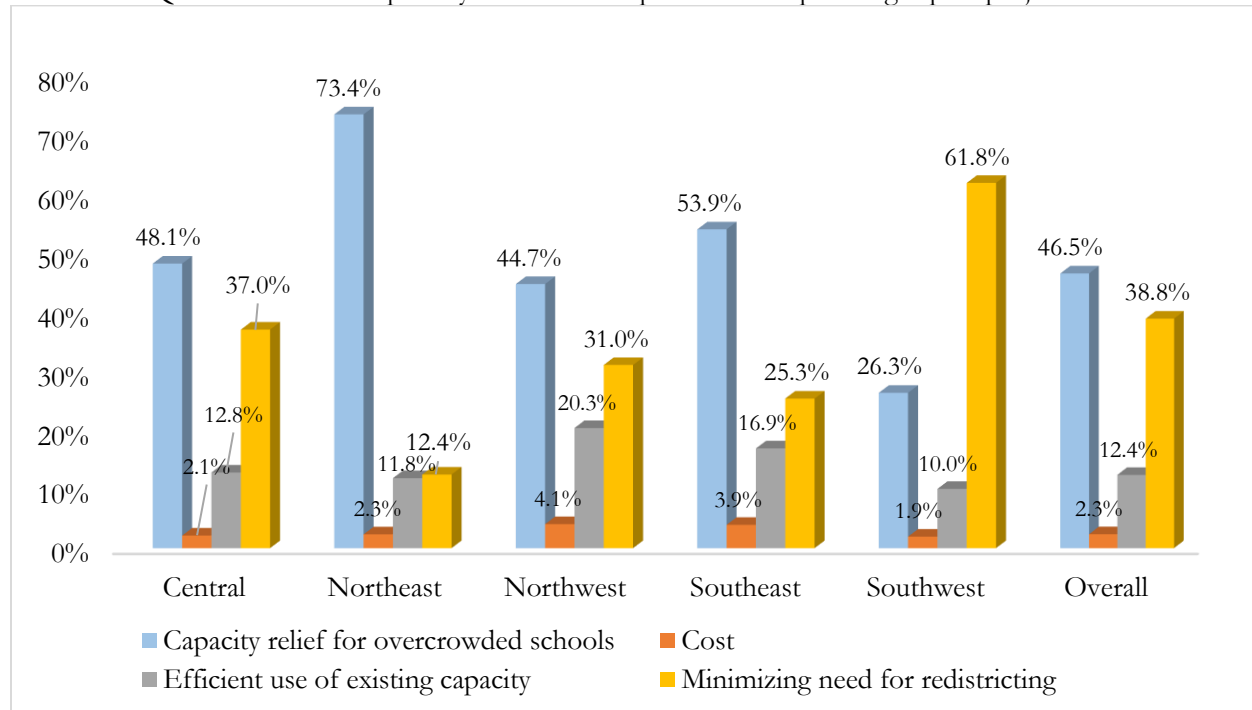
Exhibit 14. Question 4: “When considering program placement which priority is most important?”



Question 5: Which priority is the most important when planning capital projects?

Overall, capacity relief (46.5%) and minimizing the need for redistricting (38.8%) appear to be the top priorities for respondents in the identification and planning of capital projects. Importantly, relatively few respondents prioritize cost of construction (2.3% marked as top priority). For all regions except for the Southwest, capacity relief was by far the top priority cited by respondents. The Northeast is associated with the largest share of respondents prioritizing capacity relief for overcrowded schools (73.4% marked as top priority). The Southwest produced the largest share of respondents prioritizing minimizing the need for redistricting (61.8% marked as top priority). Compared to other regions, the Northwest had a greater share of respondents prioritizing the efficient use of existing capacity (20.3% marked as top priority in capital project planning, compared to 12.4% overall).

Exhibit 15. Question 5: “Which priority is the most important when planning capital projects?”

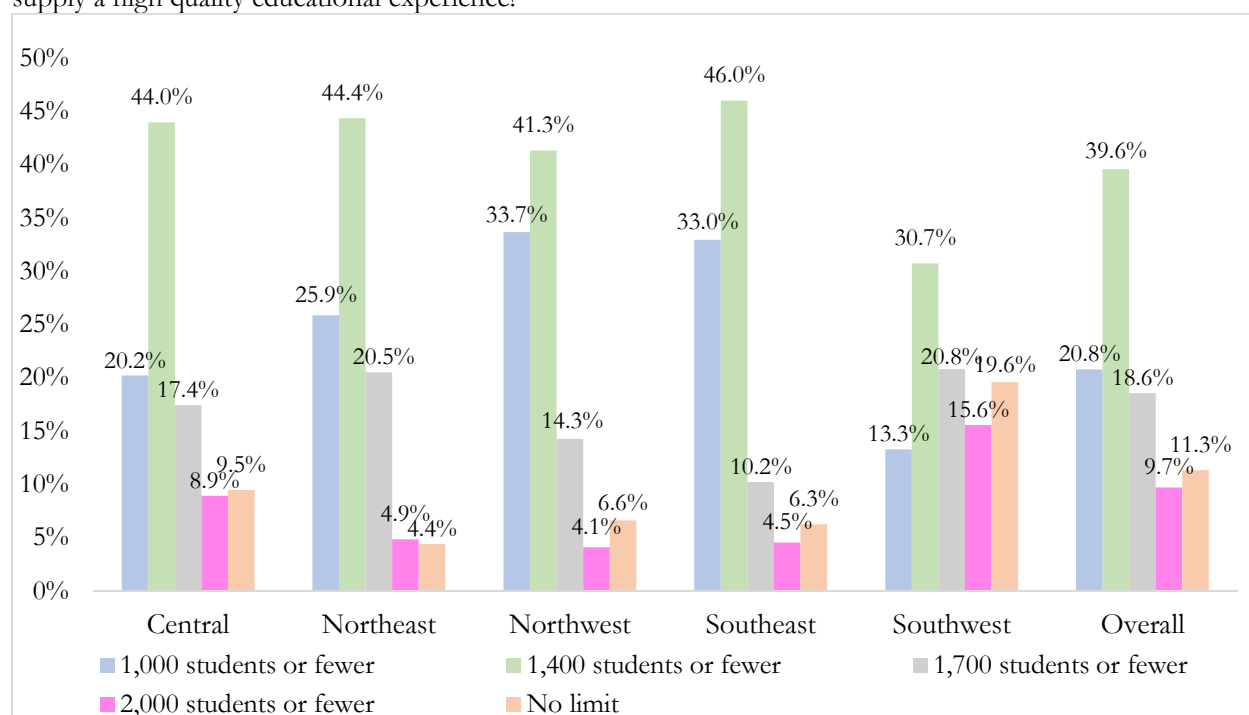


Question 6: What do you view as the largest enrollment a high school can maintain and still supply a high quality educational experience?

Nearly 40 percent of respondents believe that a high school can maintain maximum enrollment of 1,400 students and still supply a high-quality educational experience. About 21 percent of respondents think that the maximum capacity is 1,000 students. Another 19 percent think that a high school can accommodate up to 1,700 students without compromising students' educational experience.

Relative to other regions, the Southwest generated a larger share of respondents indicating that there is no limit on the level of enrollment a high school can handle (19.6% compared to 11.3% overall). By contrast, the Northwest and Southeast regions tended to be associated with a heavy preference for schools with no more than 1,000 students (33.7% and 33.0%, respectively compared to 20.8% overall).

Exhibit 16. Question 6: “What do you view as the largest enrollment a high school can maintain and still supply a high quality educational experience?”

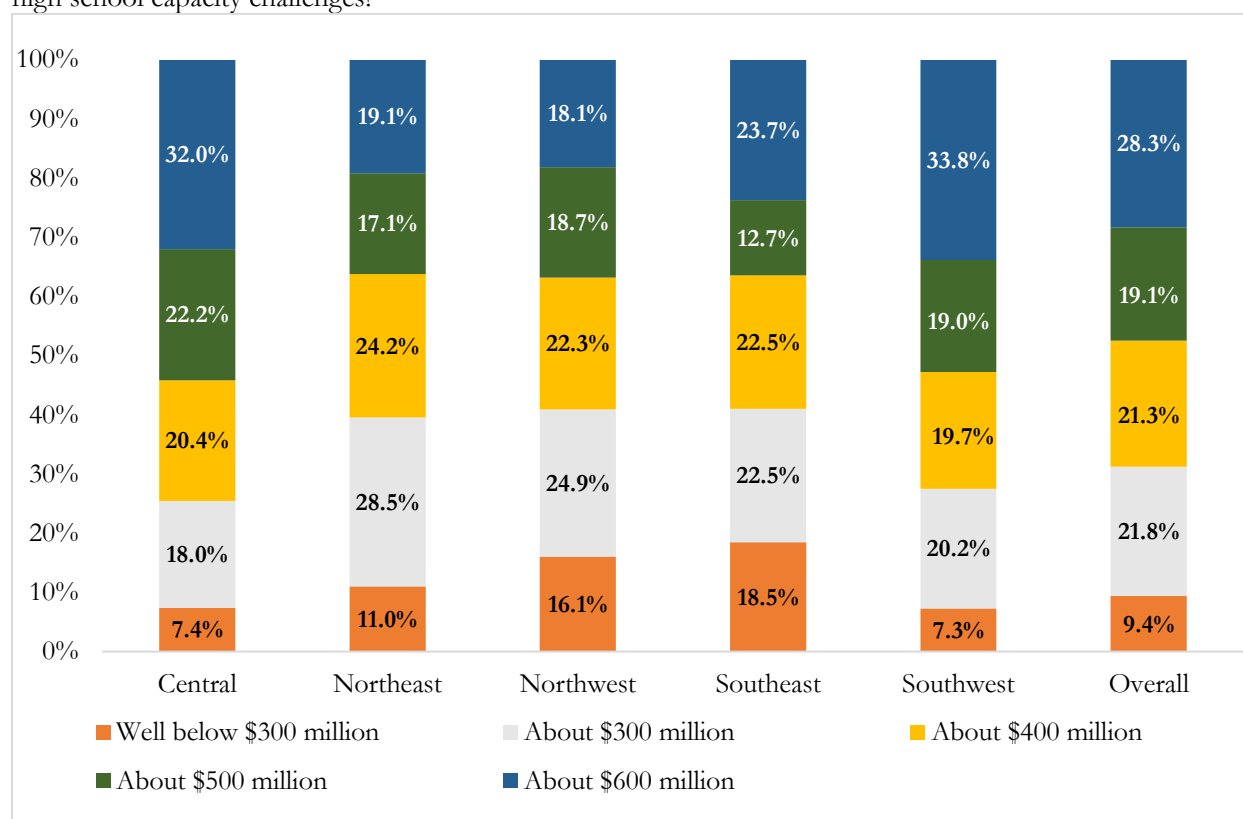


Question 7: What is the maximum amount you would support BCPS spending on meeting its high school capacity challenges?

Overall, 28.3 percent of respondents support BCPS spending a maximum of approximately \$600 million on high school capacity challenges. For 19.1% of respondents, about \$500 million is the maximum they would support in capital spending. Aggregated, that means that 47.5 percent of respondents support spending a maximum of \$500 or \$600 million. Approximately 21 percent of respondents support spending a maximum in the range of \$400 million while another 22 percent support spending in the neighborhood of \$300 million. This means that 43.1 percent of respondents support spending a maximum of \$300 or \$400 million. Only about 9 percent support BCPS spending well below \$300 million.

Respondents in the Northwest and Southeast regions appear to be more concerned about limiting spending. Relative to other regions, the Northwest and Southeast regions produced larger shares of respondents wanting BCPS to spend well below \$300 million (16.1% and 18.5% compared to 9.4% overall). Respondents in the Central and Southwest regions appear to want BCPS to spend more on dealing with the capacity problem. Compared to other regions, the Central and Southwest regions generated larger shares of respondents wanting to spend \$500 or \$600 million (54.1% and 52.8% compared to 47.5% overall).

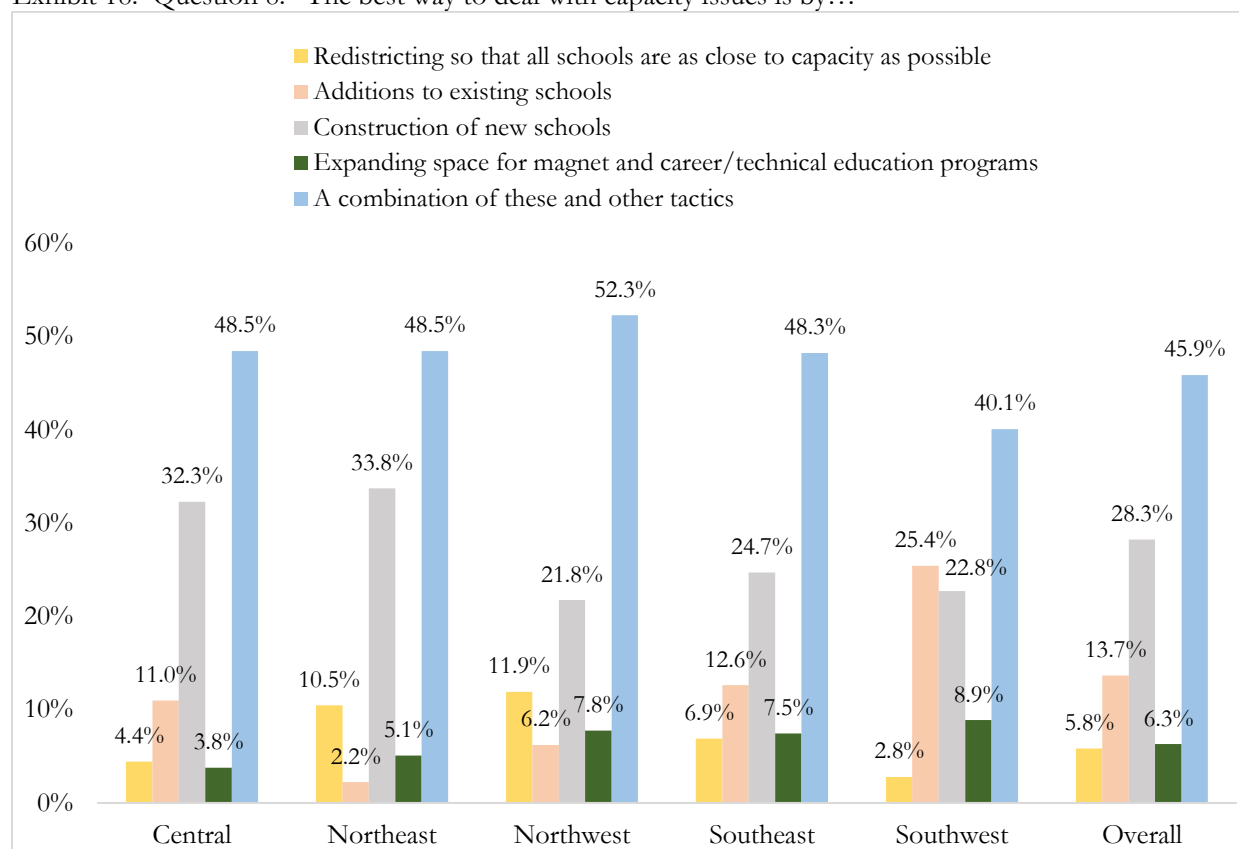
Exhibit 17. Question 7: “What is the maximum amount you would support BCPS spending on meeting its high school capacity challenges?”



Question 8. The best way to deal with capacity issues is by . . .

Overall, a large fraction of respondents believe that a combination of tactics will be required to productively deal with capacity issues (46%). Construction of new schools was the tactic chosen next most frequently (28%) followed by additions to existing schools (14%), expanding space for magnet and career/technical education programs (a bit more than 6%), and finally redistricting (a bit less than 6%). Respondents in the Southwest region are especially averse to redistricting (fewer than 3 percent of Southwest respondents chose this as the best tactic).

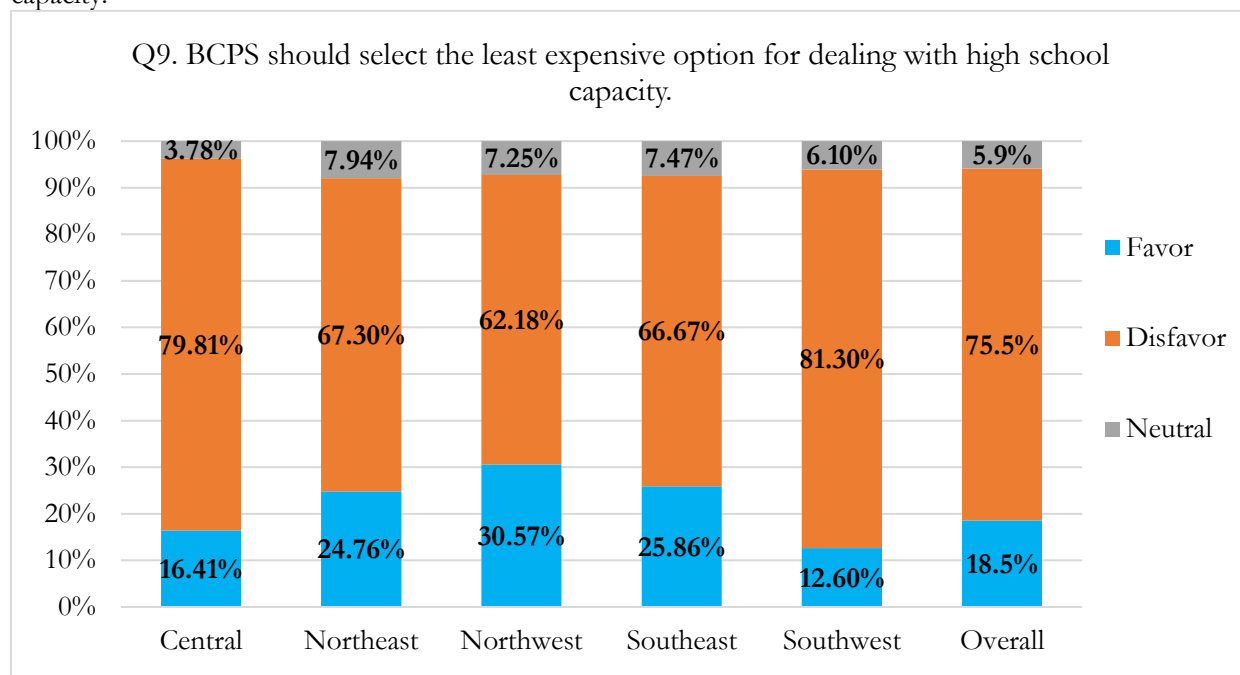
Exhibit 18. Question 8: “The best way to deal with capacity issues is by...”



Question 9: Should BCPS select the least expensive option for dealing with high school capacity issues?

The vast majority of respondents were against BCPS choosing the least expensive option for dealing with high school capacity challenges (an astonishing 76% disfavor). Respondents in the Northwest region are associated with the highest level of support for pursuing the least expensive option (31% of respondents in favor). Respondents in the Southwest region generated the lowest level of support for pursuing the least expensive option (13%).

Exhibit 19. Question 9: “BCPS should select the least expensive option for dealing with high school capacity.”



Favor = “Strongly Agree” + “Somewhat Agree”

Disfavor = “Strongly Disagree” + “Somewhat Disagree”

Neutral = “No Opinion”

First Survey Closing Comments

Many BCPS stakeholders are willing to have the system and other funders invest substantial capital resources to address current and prospective high school overcrowding issues. Many of these same stakeholders are highly averse to redistricting and conclude that new investment will be necessary to avoid widespread use of the capacity/enrollment balancing mechanism. The aversion to redistricting is especially intense in the Southwest. That said, if programs can be moved in ways that support efficient capacity utilization, many stakeholders are willing to allow various programs, including magnet programs, to move.

Phase Three

An Extended, Expanded Study

Community stakeholders collectively indicated that they wanted the study to include:

1. Considerations of facility conditions;
2. Neighborhood continuity more firmly integrated into school feeder patterns; and
3. Options that expanded the opportunity for students to be exposed to more subject matters while minimizing the need for boundary changes.

The considerations could not be fully incorporated into the original study's scope and timeframe. Accordingly, on July 27, 2018, Interim Superintendent Verletta White issued a letter notifying the BCPS community that the study would be expanded to include a broader set of considerations and additional scenarios. The corresponding letter is presented as Appendix B of this report.

Once the study team developed new scenarios, generically labeled Scenarios A, B, and C, a second set of activities commenced inviting public comment. For instance, there was another set of gallery walks. The initial Phase 3 gallery walk transpired at New Town High School on September 18, 2018. The second Phase 3 gallery walk took place at Eastern Technical High School on September 24, 2018. The last of these gallery walks occurred at Loch Raven High School on October 2, 2018.

The study team also crafted a new survey, which with BCPS' able assistance became available to stakeholders online on September 18, 2018. The survey was available to respondents until October 7, 2018.

In response to previously garnered public input, the new scenarios were constructed around limiting school size to the extent practicable, minimizing redistricting whenever possible, and increasing access to magnet programs through both program relocation and expansion. Because the new scenarios consider facility condition, estimated capital costs are generally higher. While the average capital cost associated with the initial seven scenarios was \$437 million, the average cost of the final three scenarios is \$608 million.

The costs of the newly-developed scenarios, while greater than the previous iteration, were relatively consistent and ranged from \$590-\$628 million. Per public input, several of the proposed solutions in the new scenarios do not address capacity and are purely focused on the improvement of challenging physical conditions. This is a partial cause of the greater costs associated with the new scenarios. The lack of variance in cost is rather useful. The initial seven scenarios varied widely in terms of estimated cost, with stakeholders frequently expressing a strong preference for pricier options. By holding estimated cost roughly constant, the study team was able to better determine what matters most to stakeholders, whether school size, access to magnet programs, or the level of proposed and involuntary student movement through boundary change processes.

Scenario A

Scenario A embodies 10 capital projects, the most among the finalist scenarios. This scenario also expands magnet school capacities and improves conditions at the largest number of high schools, all while generating the lowest estimate of capital cost. This represents the only scenario that addresses facility conditions at Eastern Technical High School. It is also the only scenario not associated with replacement schools at Dulaney and Lansdowne, though both academies would be renovated. There would, however, be replacement schools at Towson and Loch Raven, with both schools significantly expanded to address overcrowding in the Central region. The scenario would also relocate some Catonsville students to a rebuilt and larger Western School of Technology. The scenario also adds seats at Dundalk/Sollers Point, Sparrows Point, and Patapsco to alleviate prospective overcrowding in the Southeast.

The scenario includes three replacement schools:

- 1) Loch Raven High School (+743 seats)
- 2) Towson High School (+440 seats)
- 3) Western School of Technology (+454 seats)

The scenario includes three additions to existing schools to increase capacity:

- 1) Dundalk/Sollers Point High School (+276 seats)
- 2) Owings Mills High School (+314 seats)
- 3) Patapsco High School (+275 seats)

The scenario includes two renovations to existing schools, which would also help address capacity issues:

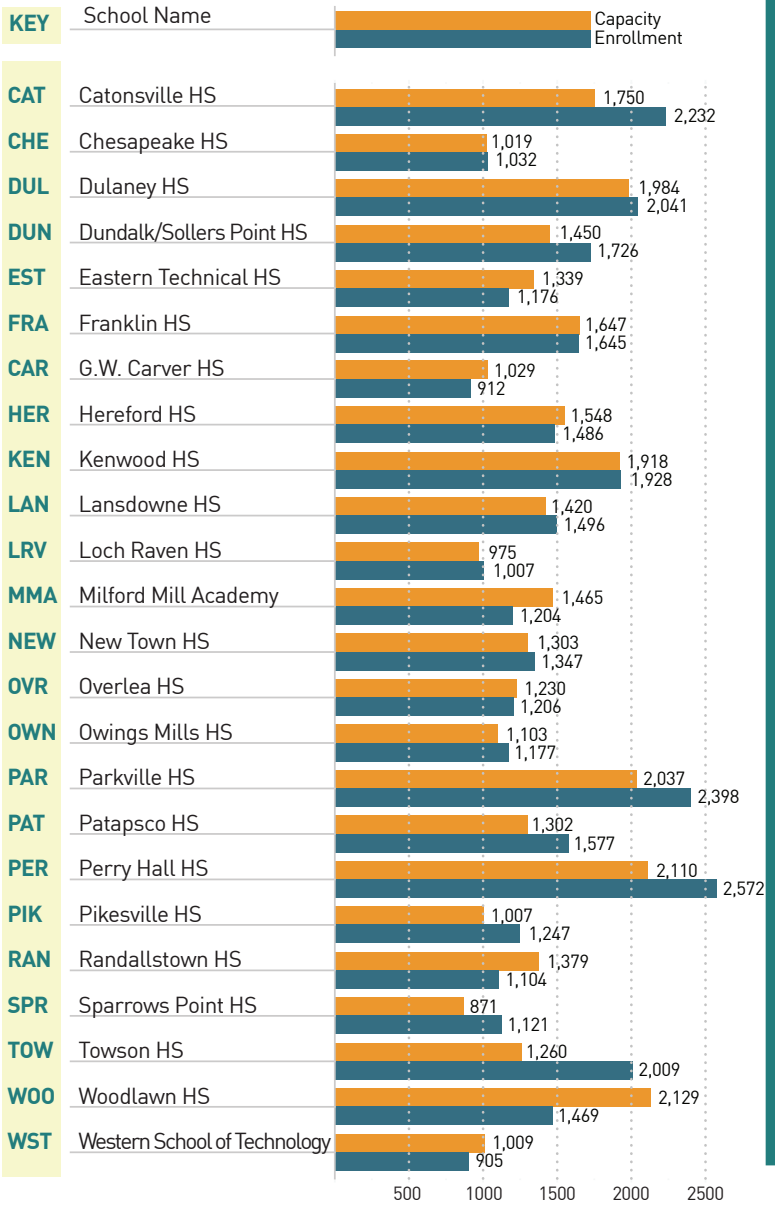
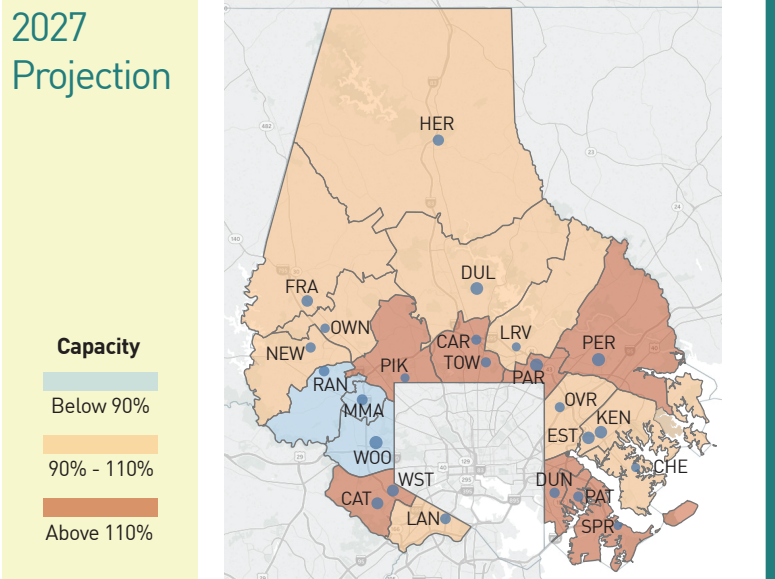
- 1) Eastern Technical High School (+198 seats)
- 2) Sparrows Point High School (+250 seats)

Finally, the scenario includes two renovations to existing schools that would improve facility conditions:

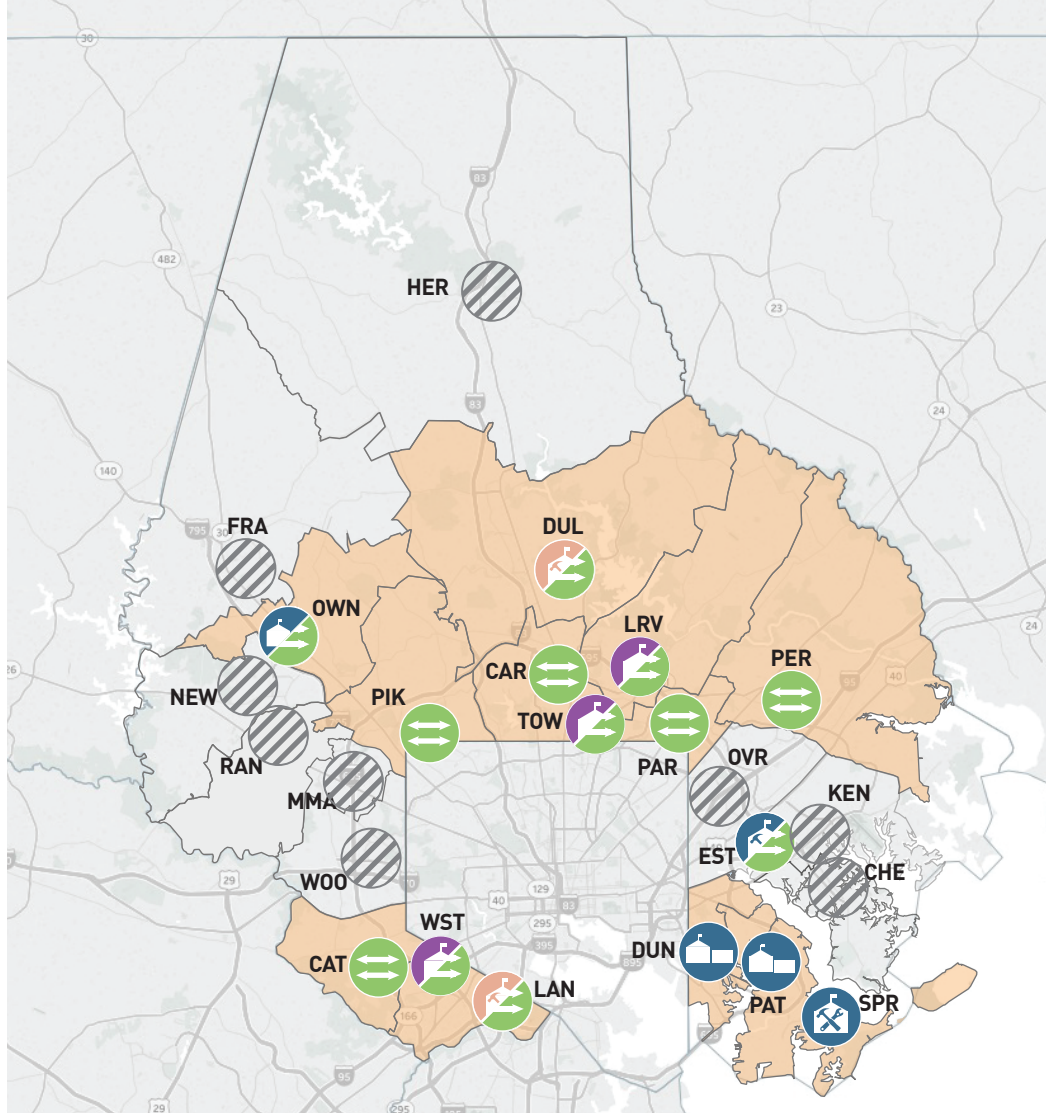
- 1) Dulaney High School
- 2) Lansdowne High School

Total capital costs for Scenario A are estimated at \$590 million, the lowest among the three finalist scenarios. It would add an additional 2,950 seats, of which 652 would be in magnet programs. This represents the fewest new total seats but the most new magnet seats of any scenario. The scenario would relocate 1,987 students either through boundary change processes or through voluntary movement to a magnet program. Schools sizes under this scenario would, for the most part, remain close to or less than 1,700.

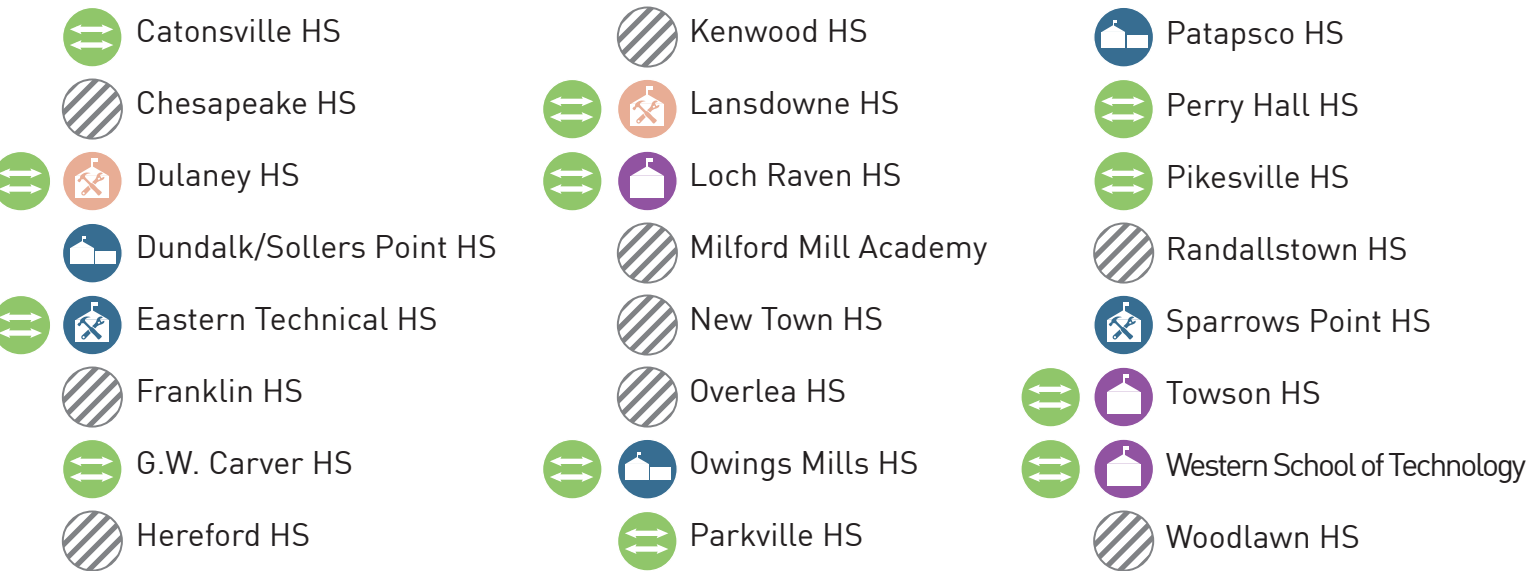
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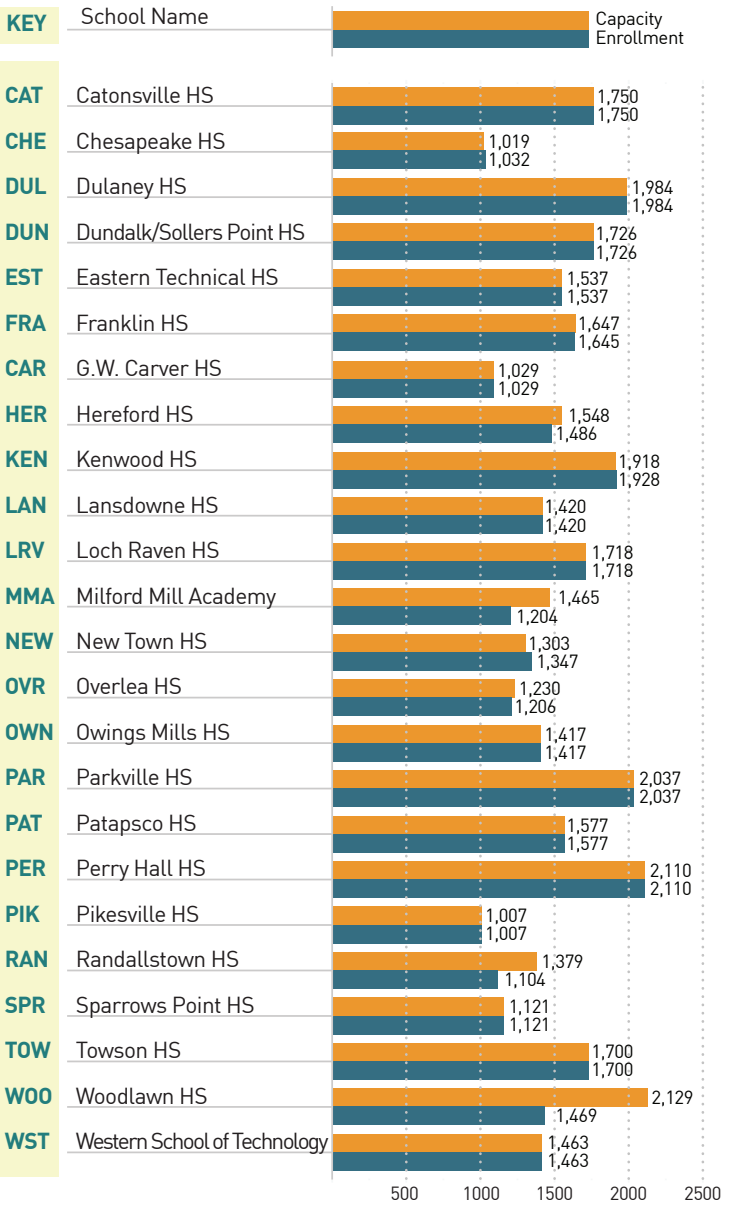
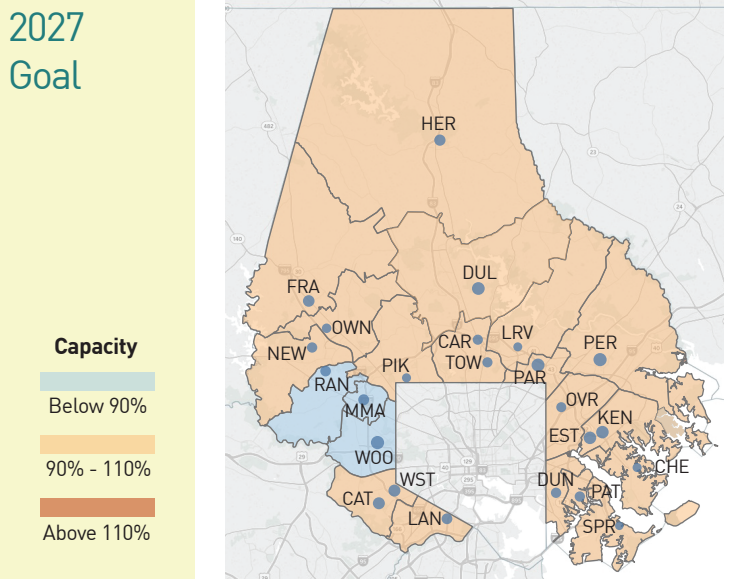
SCENARIO A ACTION:



Scenario Detailed Summary



RESULT:



Scenario B

Scenario B incorporates certain elements of the FY2019 capital plan and represents the most expensive option among the newly-created scenarios. The scenario increases capacity significantly, including at magnet schools (e.g. Western, Carver) and impacts the fewest school communities via boundary change processes. The scenario encompasses five replacement schools, including replacement schools at both Dulaney and Lansdowne. Like Scenario A, there would be replacement schools at Loch Raven, Towson, and Western School of Technology.

The scenario encompasses five replacement schools:

- 1) Dulaney High School (+57 seats)
- 2) Lansdowne High School (+280 seats)
- 3) Loch Raven High School (+725 seats)
- 4) Towson High School (+440 seats)
- 5) Western School of Technology (+174 seats)

The scenario includes three additions to existing schools to increase capacity:

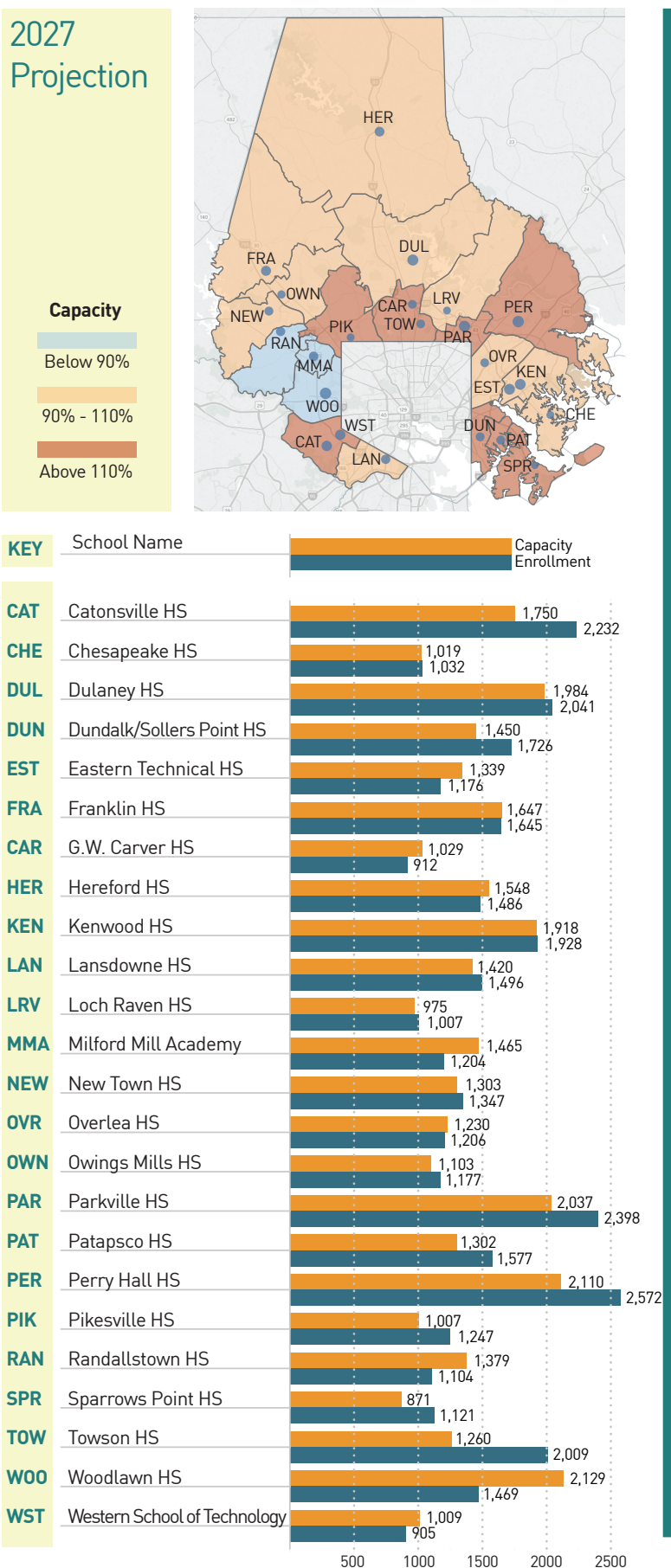
- 1) Dundalk/Sollers Point High School (+550 seats)
- 2) George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology (+322 seats)
- 3) Pikesville High School (+240 seats)

The scenario includes one renovation to an existing school, which would also help address capacity issues:

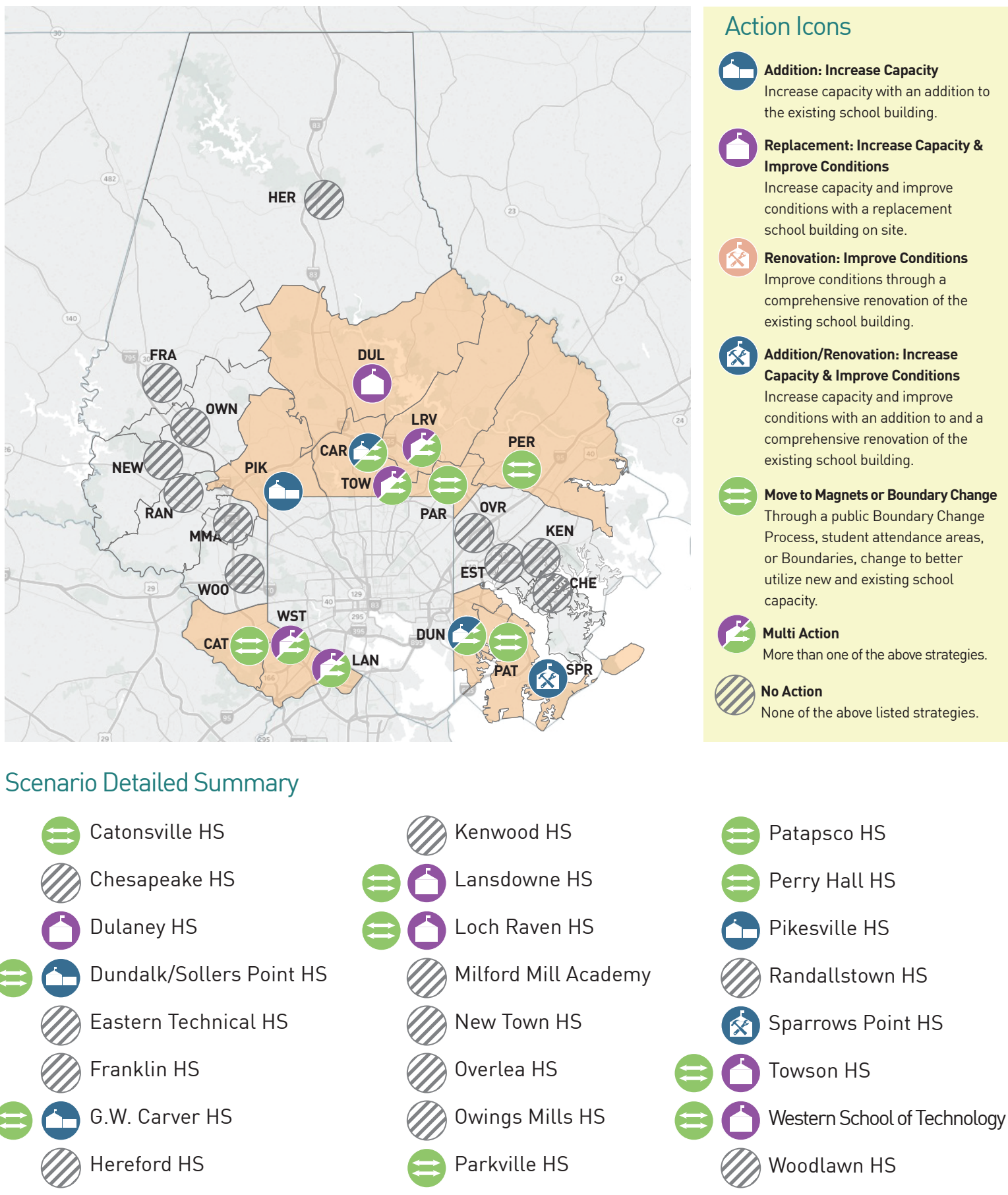
- 1) Sparrows Point High School (+250 seats)

Total capital costs for the nine projects is estimated \$628 million, with \$87 million attached to magnet schools. This addresses facilities conditions at 6 schools, second most among the three scenarios. The scenario would create 3,038 additional seats, of which 496 seats would be in magnet programs at two of BCPS' pure magnet schools. Note that magnet seats would only be created in the Central and Western regions. While it would also relocate 1,889 students, most of whom would be subject to a boundary change process, this scenario subjects the lowest number of school communities to such processes. Catonsville would be impacted by such a process, however, with some students relocated to brand new replacement schools at Lansdowne and Western School of Technology.

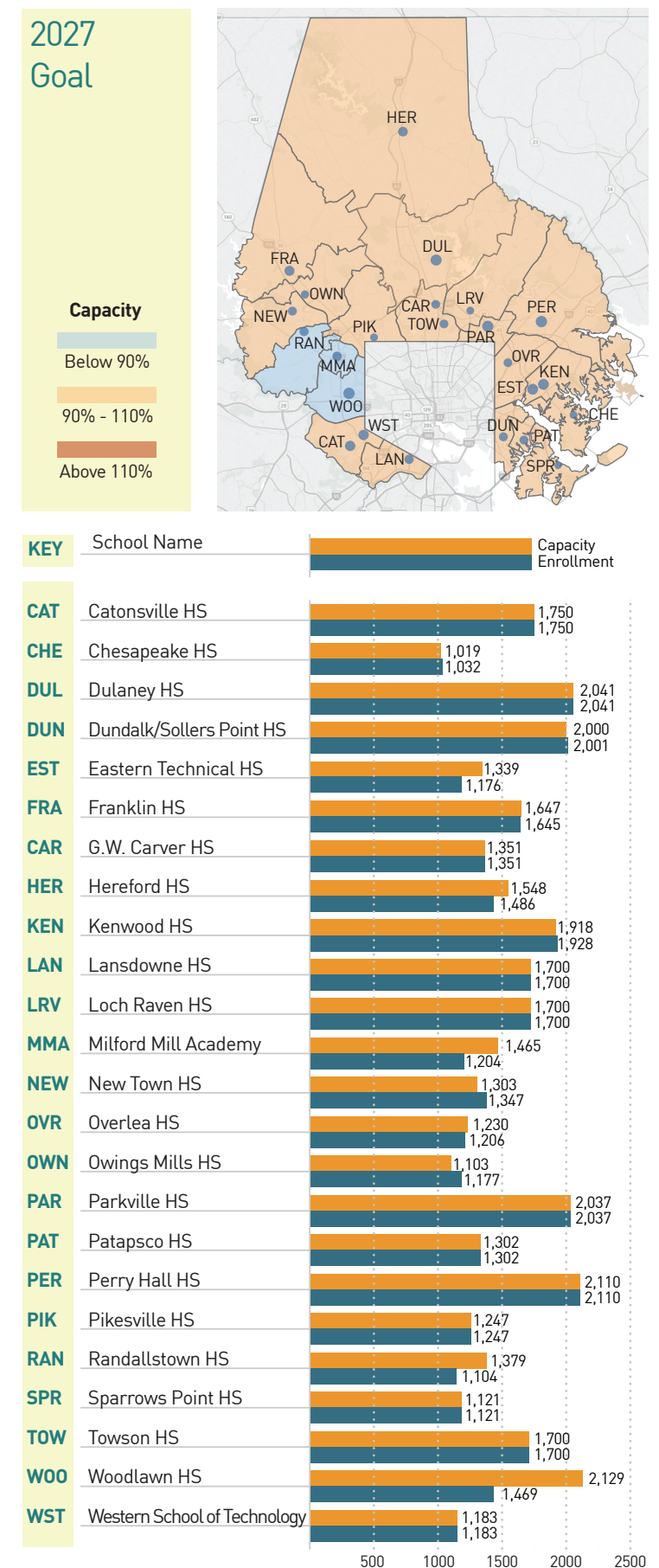
BEFORE:



SCENARIO B ACTION:



RESULT:



Scenario C

Scenario C embodies the fewest number of capital projects, though there are many replacement schools included among them. It would improve facility conditions at five schools, though it would not address physical issues at Western School of Technology or at Eastern Technical High School, two pure magnet schools. No additional magnet seats are added in this scenario, and some schools would be required to exceed the “optimal” 1,700-seat tally to suppress the need for boundary change processes.

The scenario encompasses five replacement schools that would also be capacity enhancing:

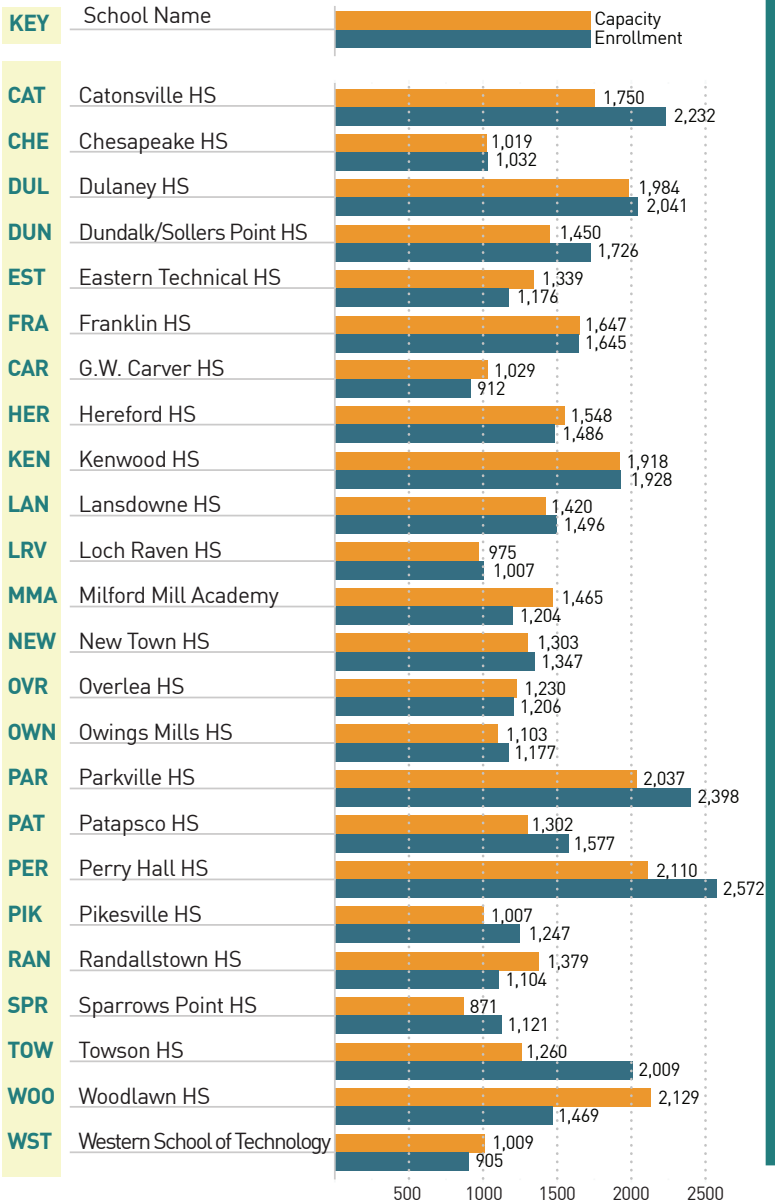
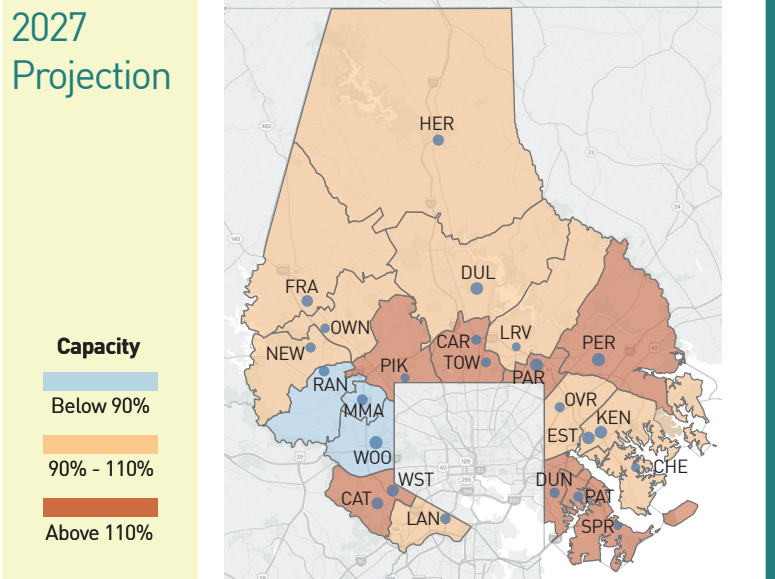
- 1) Dulaney High School (+57 seats)
- 2) Lansdowne High School (+454 seats)
- 3) Loch Raven High School (+692 seats)
- 4) Sparrows Point (+525)
- 5) Towson High School (+749 seats)

The scenario includes two additions to existing schools to increase capacity:

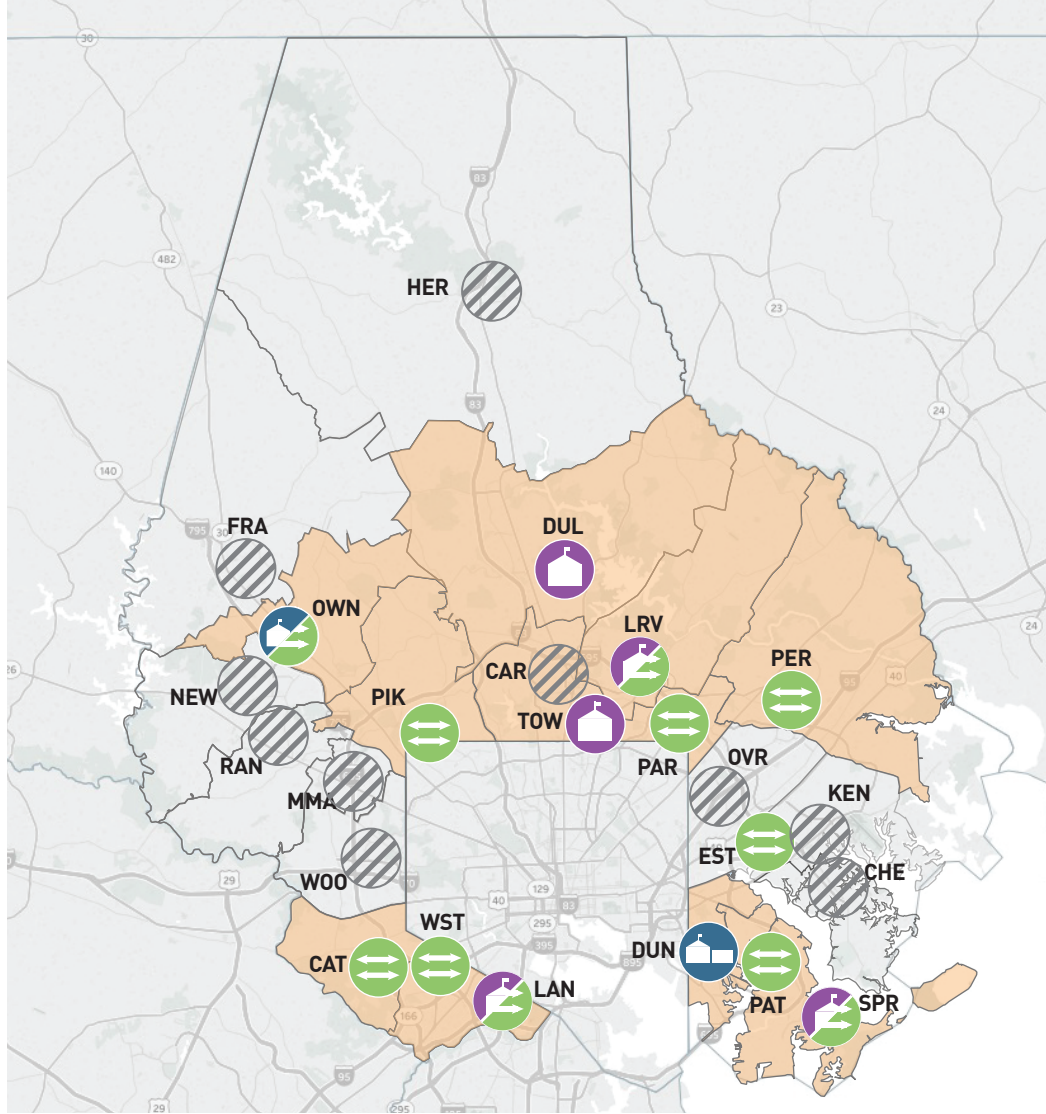
- 1) Dundalk/Sollers Point High School (+275 seats)
- 2) Owings Mills High School (+314 seats)

Total capital costs for the seven projects are estimated at \$605 million. The scenario would add an additional 3,066 seats, and would relocate 1,820 students, fewest among the three scenarios. This is accomplished in part by allowing for larger schools. Since no new magnet seats are added, all relocation of students would come via boundary changes processes.

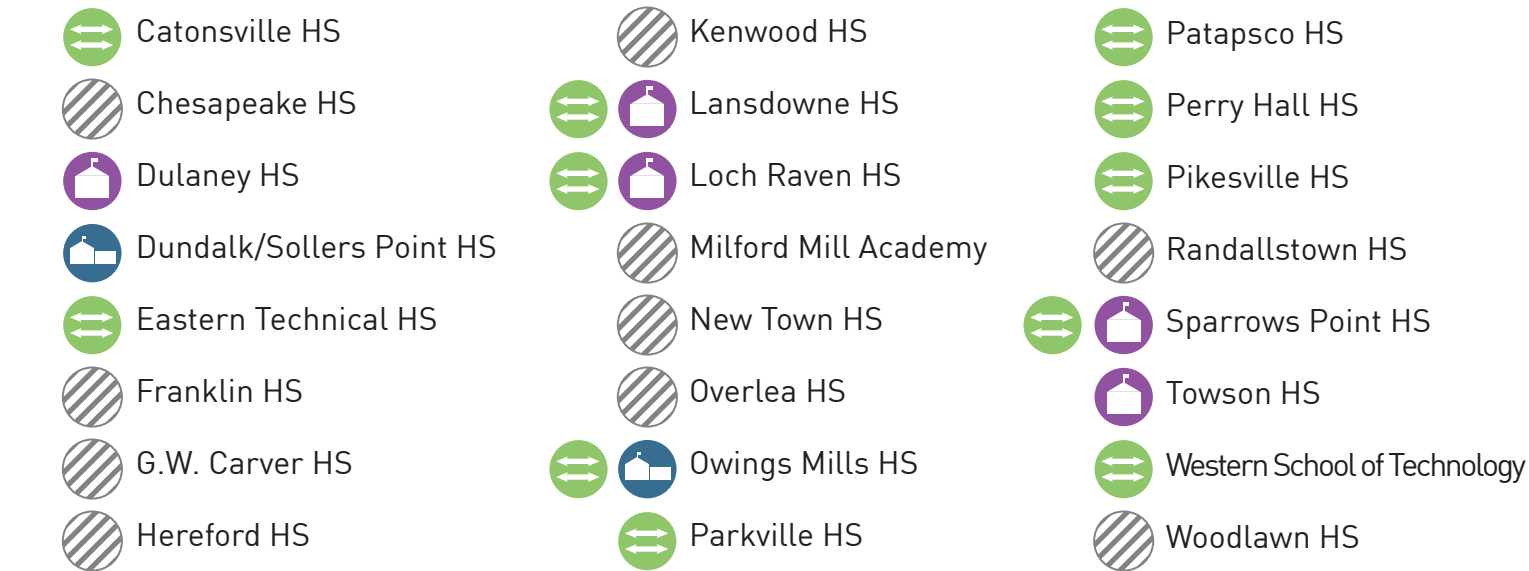
BEFORE:



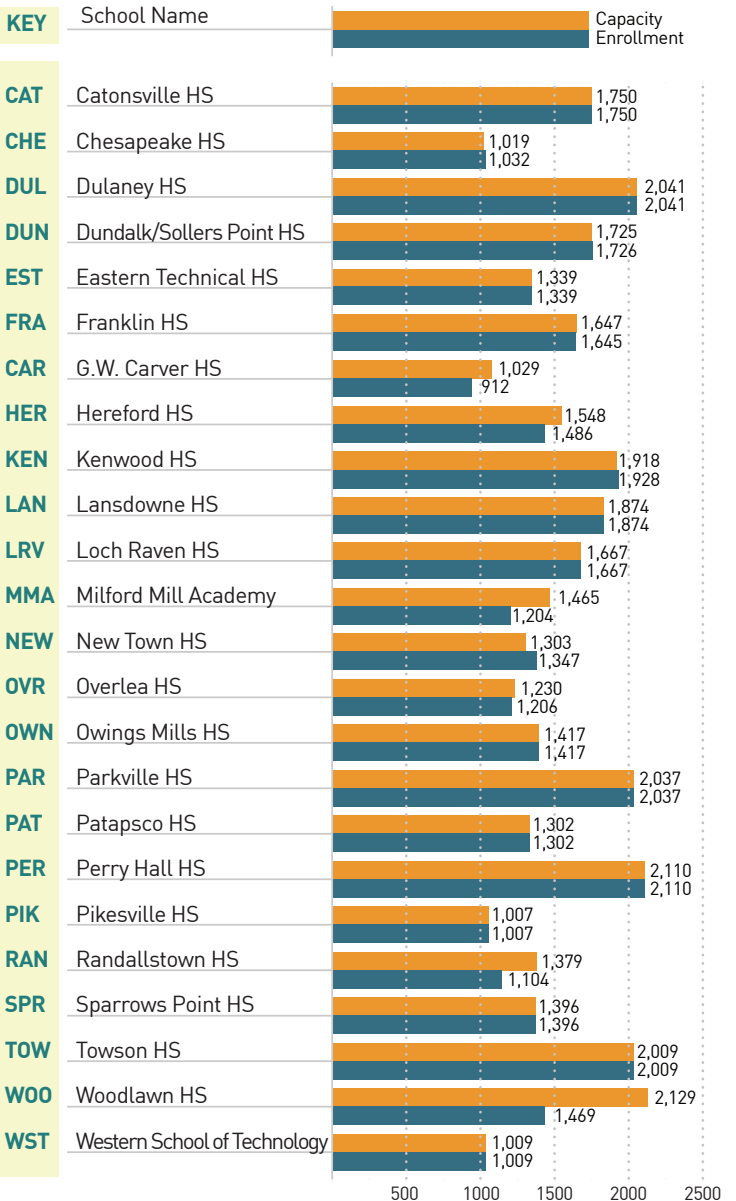
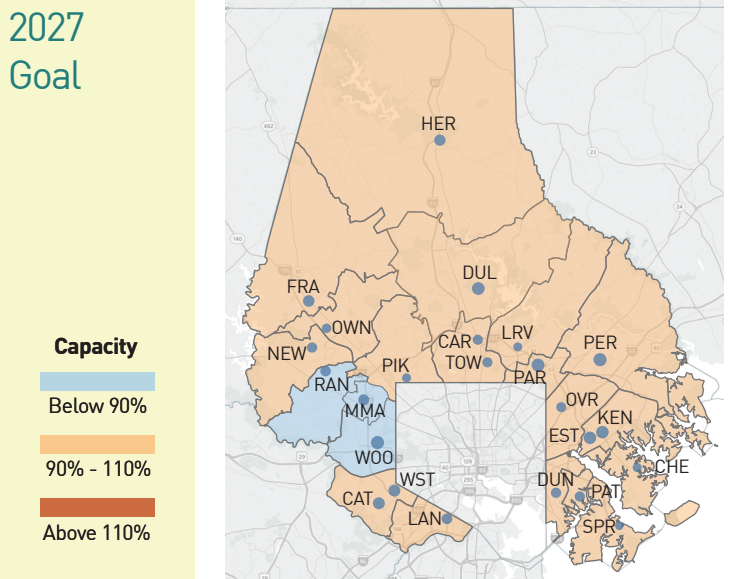
SCENARIO C ACTION:



Scenario Detailed Summary



RESULT:



Comparing the Finalists

The Second Survey

In July 2018, Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) and Sage Policy Group, Inc. (Sage) invited stakeholders to attend Public Information Sessions to review 7 theme-based scenarios addressing BCPS high school utilization and capacity relief over the next 10 years. Public comment, e-mails, and an online survey gathered feedback regarding these scenarios and strategies to address growing enrollment at high schools in Baltimore County as part of a system wide high school capacity study. Based on this feedback, Scenarios A, B, and C were developed to reflect the sentiments and priorities expressed. Also, at the direction of the BCPS Interim Superintendent, the new scenarios included consideration of facility condition. These new scenarios were presented at a second round of Public Information Sessions in September/October 2018 for further comment, and a second online survey was conducted.

Scenarios A, B, and C are relatively similar in terms of cost (ranging from \$590 million to \$628 million), the amount of new capacity added, and the number of students who would potentially and prospectively be relocated. Respondents were asked about their favorable or negative views regarding each of these three scenarios. What follows is an assessment of stakeholder feedback captured by the study team and innumerable volunteers who helped to record stakeholder impressions.

Findings

The exhibit below provides summary detail regarding the volume of (second) survey responses. In total, approximately 6,291 people responded to the latter survey, or nearly double the number responding to a similarly-structured July 2018 survey (3,352). The exhibit below reflects the fact that the Central region was responsible for nearly half of (second) survey responses.

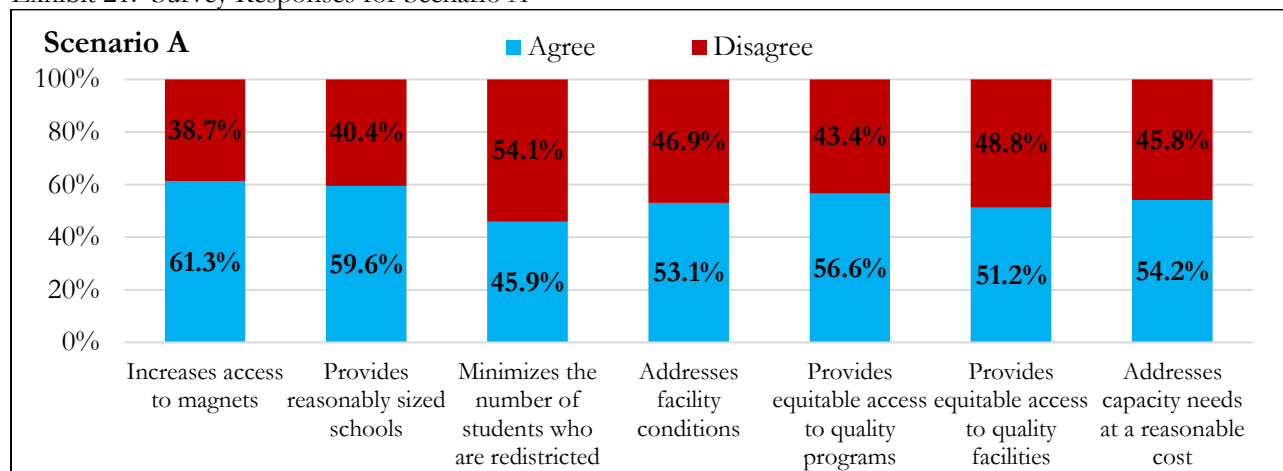
Exhibit 20. Geographic Breakdown of Survey Respondents

Region	Responses	% of Total
Central	2,927	46.5%
Northeast	929	14.8%
Northwest	399	6.3%
Southeast	359	5.7%
Southwest	1,647	26.2%
Other	30	0.5%
Total	6,291	100.0%

Opinions Regarding Scenario A

Scenario A prioritizes magnet programs by increasing capacity at magnet schools and improving the conditions of magnet facilities. This scenario is associated with both the lowest capital costs and the most capital projects. Most stakeholders found this proposed set of solutions to be appealing with one glaring exception – it fails to minimize the number of students who are susceptible to relocation.

Exhibit 21. Survey Responses for Scenario A



Agree = “Agree” + “Strongly Agree”

Disagree = “Disagree” + “Strongly Disagree”

Regional Variations

Views regarding Scenario A differ widely by region. Only one in three respondents from the Northeast felt that this Scenario expands access to magnets. By contrast, nearly 84 percent of respondents from the Southwest felt that Scenario A expands access to magnets.

Only 38 percent of respondents from the Central region indicated that Scenario A does a good job minimizing the number of redistricted students. Moreover, fewer than half of Central region stakeholders (46.5%) feel that Scenario A does a good job addressing facility conditions, but nearly three in four Southeast respondents believe that Scenario A does a good job along this dimension.

A bit less than one in two Central region respondents agreed that Scenario A supplies equitable access to quality programs. But in the Southeast, more than three in four agreed. Only 43 percent of Central region stakeholders agree that Scenario A provides equitable access to high quality facilities. In the Southeast, the corresponding proportion approached 72 percent.

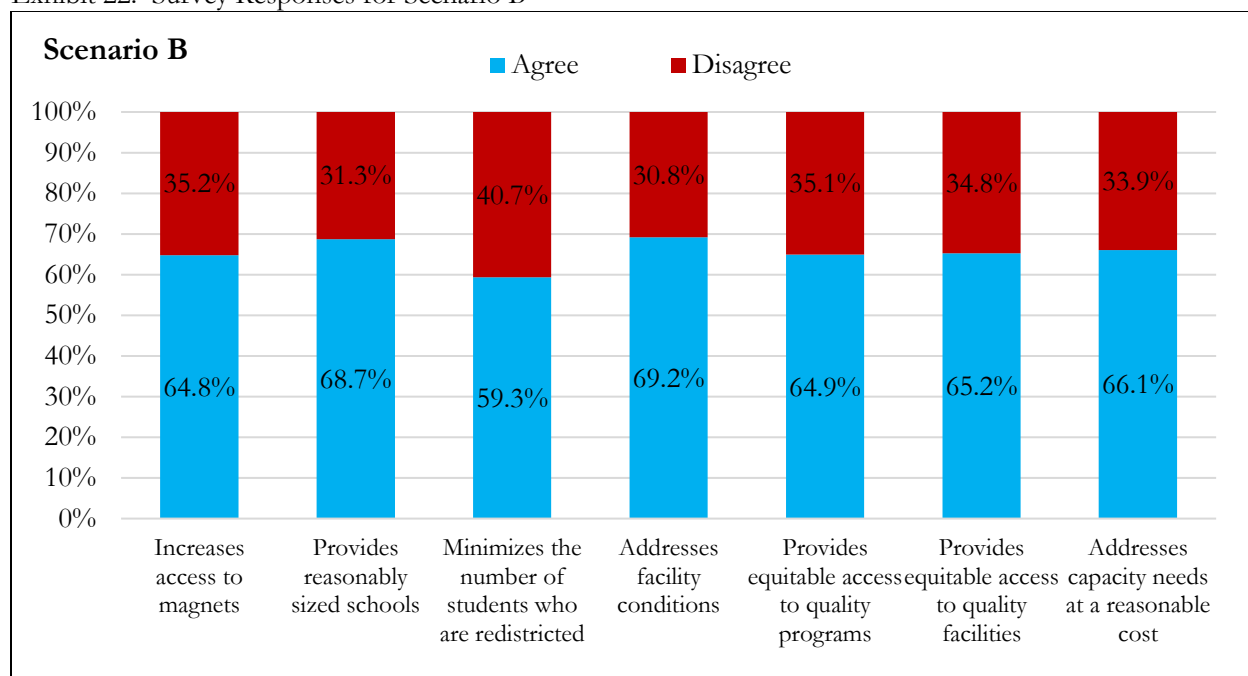
Finally, fewer than half of survey respondents from the Central region (47%) agree that Scenario A addresses capacity needs at a reasonable cost. In short, Scenario A is rather unpopular among those in the Central region but was quite popular among others. Finally, fewer than half of survey respondents from the Central region (47%) agree that Scenario A addresses capacity needs at a reasonable cost. In short, Scenario A is rather unpopular among those in the Central region, but was quite popular among others.

Opinions Regarding Scenario B

Scenario B prioritizes the FY2019 capital plan and is the most expensive option. The scenario increases capacity significantly, including at magnet schools, and has the least impact on schools in terms of boundary changes.

Respondents overwhelmingly indicate that this scenario improves conditions for students along all dimensions they were asked about. Despite being the most expensive option, 66.1 percent of respondents believe that scenario B addresses the county's capacity needs at a reasonable cost. This represents a higher share than for the other scenarios, reiterating the conclusion reached during Phase I of the public engagement process that many BCPS stakeholders would be perfectly content to invest significant resources in addressing BCPS's capacity and school condition needs.

Exhibit 22. Survey Responses for Scenario B



Agree = "Agree" + "Strongly Agree"

Disagree = "Disagree" + "Strongly Disagree"

Regional Variations

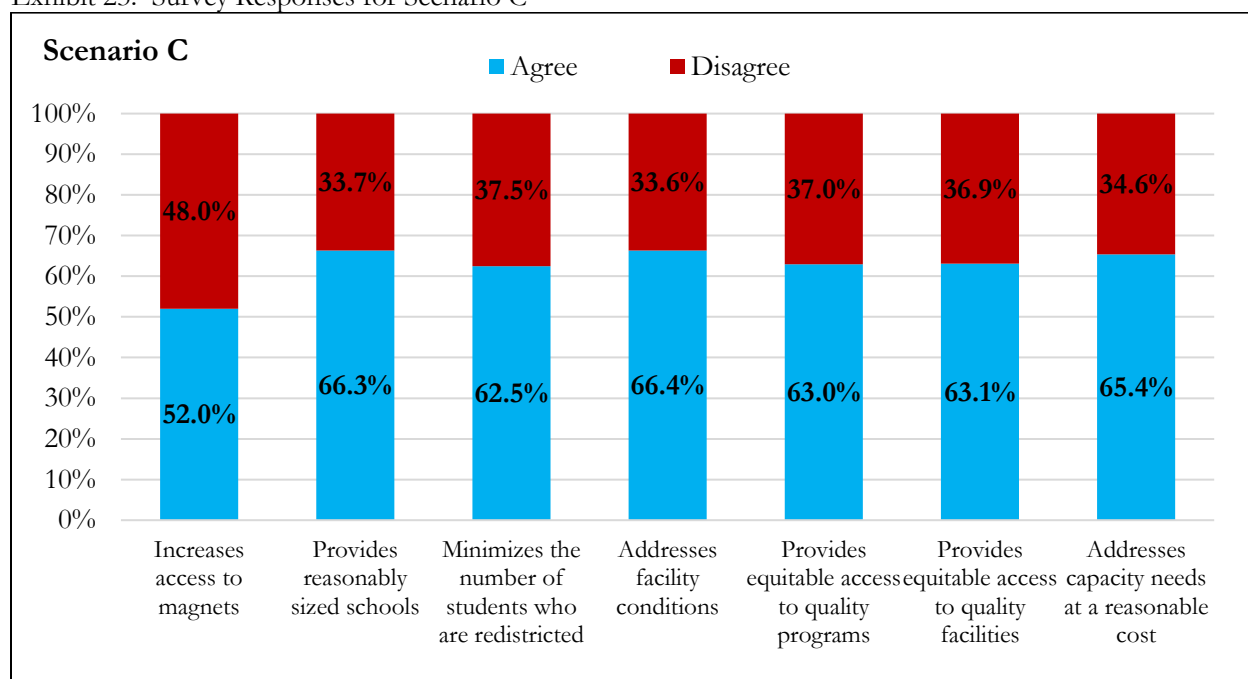
In each region, more than half of respondents agree that Scenario B does a good job addressing facility conditions. The respondent share in the Southeast is lower (50.7%) than in other regions. Fewer than half of respondents from the Southeast (49.7%) agree that this scenario supplies equitable access to quality facilities. This compares to a range of 54 -72 percent in other regions.

Opinions Regarding Scenario C

Like Scenario B, Scenario C also prioritizes the FY2019 capital plan. It is the second most expensive option. Scenario C impacts the fewest number of students through boundary changes. It creates no new magnet program seats and is also associated with the fewest number of capital projects. Capital projects in this scenario are high cost on average.

The majority of respondents believe Scenario C improves conditions for students and addresses the county's capacity challenges at a reasonable cost. Interestingly, even though Scenario C does not increase capacity at magnet schools, 52 percent of respondents still think it increases access to magnet programs (magnet programs can still shift locations under this scenario).

Exhibit 23. Survey Responses for Scenario C



Agree = "Agree" + "Strongly Agree"

Disagree = "Disagree" + "Strongly Disagree"

Regional Variations

For all questions, a much larger share of respondents in the Central region agree that Scenario C improves circumstances (increases access to magnets, minimizes the number of students redistricted, etc.) compared to other regions. However, as reflected below, this scenario is viewed as least favorable in four of five regions. It is the second least favored Scenario in the Central region.

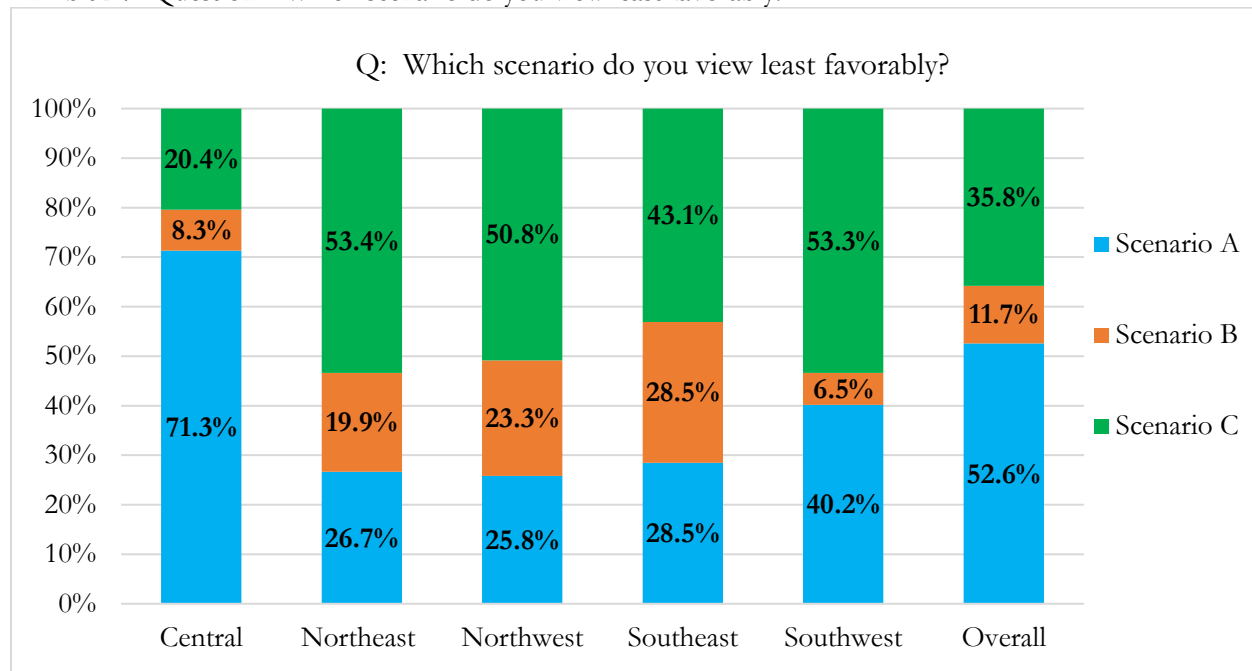
Question: Which scenario do you view least favorably?

Across all regions, 52.6 percent of respondents view Scenario A as the least favorable option to address school capacity needs. This is heavily influenced by respondents in the Central region, where more than 71 percent identify Scenario A as the least favorable option among the three.

Excluding respondents in the Central region, most respondents appear to find Scenario C to be the least favorable option. For other regions, the share of respondents identifying Scenario C as the least favorable option ranges from 43.1 percent in the Southeast to 53.4 percent in the Northeast.

As the Exhibit below indicates, Scenario B was rarely considered the least favorable scenario across all geographies. Among all regions, the Southeast was most likely to find Scenario B objectionable.

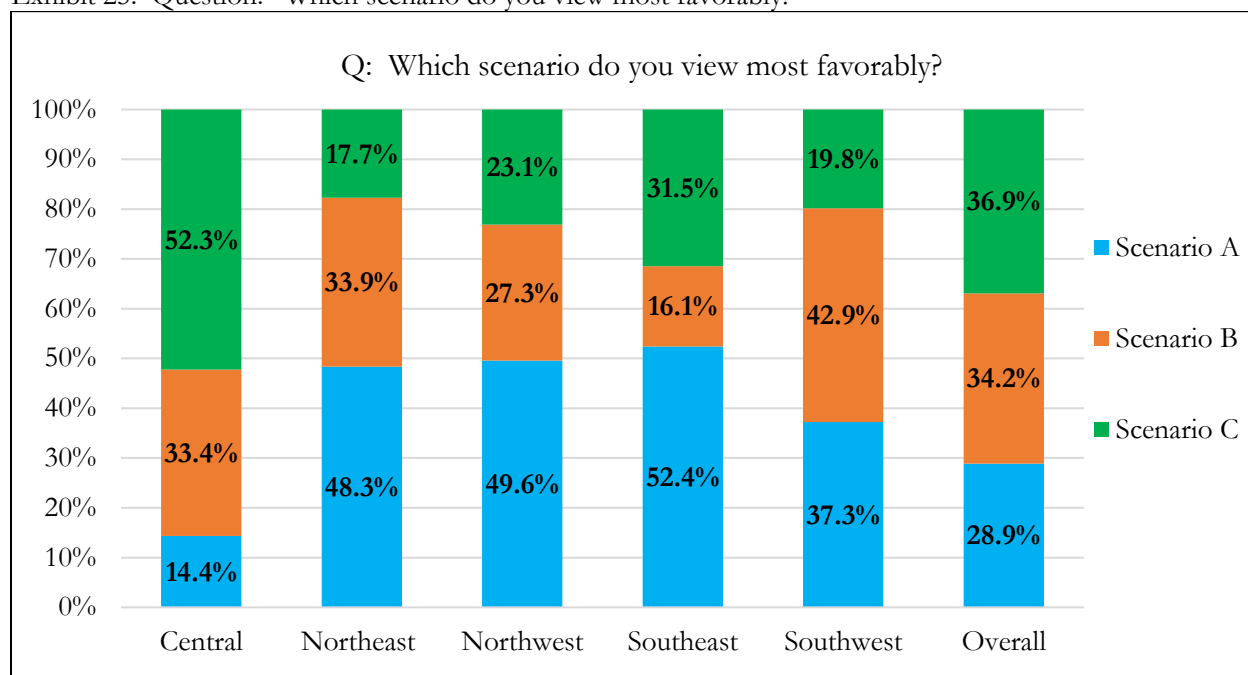
Exhibit 24. Question: “Which scenario do you view least favorably?”



Question: Which scenario do you view most favorably?

Across all regions, 36.9 percent of respondents view Scenario C as the most favorable option, with Scenario B a close second at 34.2 percent. While Scenario A was the least favored (28.9%), these results largely prevail because of preferences expressed by the Central region, where more than 52 percent prefer Scenario C. In all other regions, Scenario C garners no more than a 31.5 percent share in terms of most favored option. Excluding the Central region, respondents appear to favor Scenario A. The Southwest region was the only region for which Scenario B was favored most among the three options.

Exhibit 25. Question: “Which scenario do you view most favorably?”



Conclusion

The results for this question largely reflect responses among three primary respondent groups:

- Central Area respondents favoring scenarios that support replacement schools in that area
- Southwest Area respondents favoring scenarios that limit redistricting in that area
- Southeast Area respondents favoring scenarios that support facility improvement in that area

For purposes of this analysis, Scenario B is the least objectionable to BCPS high school stakeholders, despite having the highest cost. It is with relative rarity that this is viewed as the least favored option among stakeholders. However, in the Northeast, Northwest, and Southeast Areas, Scenario A is preferable.

- **Closing Comments Regarding Second Survey**

These tangled dynamics are driven primarily by two or three large stakeholder groups and their overarching priorities. Many in the Central area want new schools, including at Dulaney, Towson, and Loch Raven. Accordingly, any scenario that offers new school buildings in these locations is deemed highly desirable in the Central area. Another large stakeholder group comes from the Southwest, which has among its priorities a desire to avoid redistricting. There is also a large constituency in the Southeast, where much concern has been expressed about school conditions, including at Sparrows Point High School.

For purposes of this analysis, Scenario B, which happens to be the most expensive scenario, is the least objectionable to BCPS high school stakeholders in general. It is with relative rarity that this is viewed as the worst option among stakeholders. However, in 3 of 5 regions, Scenario A is viewed as a preferable option. This is true in the Northeast, Northwest, and Southeast.

Conclusion

- **Outcomes of a Publicly-Driven Process**

In the final analysis, the preferred solution is likely to involve an admixture of Scenarios A-C, each of which has been heavily shaped by public input. We have striven to provide guidance to the Board, the Superintendent, and other district leaders in terms of the policies that are likely to trigger the most vociferous protests, including redistricting at Catonsville High School that involves Woodlawn or other schools to the north, the lack of replacement schools at Lansdowne and Dulaney, and an especially large replacement school at Towson High. Stakeholders at Sparrows Point repeatedly expressed their dissatisfaction with the shared building (7400 North Pointe Road, Edgemere) that houses both a high school and a middle school.

We have also indicated some of the mechanisms the Board, Superintendent, and others have to balance enrollment and capacity without triggering boundary change processes and inducing unnecessary capital spending. Among these mechanisms is creating and/or moving magnet programs.

- **Near-Term Priorities**

Whether BCPS leadership embraces one of the three scenarios as the solution, an admixture of the three, or some variant, our analysis reveals that there are certain pressing priorities that should be addressed as soon as possible. Given the magnitude of the endeavor and uncertainties regarding the availability of State capital funds, it is conceivable that implementation will require two decades or more.

These include:

A new Towson High School (or at Loch Raven). Both Scenarios A and B call for a new Towson High School offering 1,700 seats, which represents an addition of 440 net new seats vis-à-vis the status quo. These seats would go a long way toward addressing near-term overcrowding issues, while addressing conditions at one of the most challenging high schools from the perspective of physical plant. This 1,700-seat figure has been put forward because of a growing consensus among some educational leaders in Maryland that this represents the maximum desirable size for a high school. Undoubtedly, there are many who would prefer a new but smaller Towson High School, but the Central area desperately needs net new seats.

This is not to suggest that improvements are not required at Dulaney, Loch Raven, and elsewhere. Two of our scenarios call for a new school at Dulaney, and one calls for a major renovation. All three of the scenarios call for a new school at Loch Raven, which would also add many needed seats in the Central area. In fact, a new 1,700-seat school at Loch Raven would add more net new seats in the Central area than a similarly-situated Towson facility. However, Towson High School is deemed to be in slightly worse shape physically. Several years ago, GWWO Architects authored a report supply school condition scores to each BCPS school. In that report, Dulaney High School received a score of 2.45, Loch Raven 2.39, Towson 2.36, and Lansdowne 1.74.

Adding Seats at Sparrows Point and/or Patapsco High School. Optimally, there would be a new school at Sparrows Point that would allow for physical separation between the high school and middle school, a stakeholder priority. However, the imperative to deal with prospective overcrowding in the Southeast remains, which will require additional seats a Sparrows Point High School (e.g. through a renovation, Scenario B) or at Patapsco High School (e.g. via an addition, Scenario A).

A New School at Lansdowne. One could defend this as a priority simply on the basis of school condition. It would be difficult to find a BCPS high school in worse physical shape than Lansdowne. But there is more to consider. The Southwest is overcrowded, particularly Catonsville. Choices are few. One could conceivably add seats at Catonsville, but it would be enormous and leave Lansdowne in its present state. In our judgment, the better solution is a new Lansdowne to which a limited number of Catonsville students would be shifted. If this new school encompassed 1,700 seats, which is consistent with Scenario B, an additional 280 net new seats would be created in the Southwest. One could also embrace an expansion at the Western School of Technology, which would also serve to expand the number of magnet seats. However, this could produce a significant increase in operating costs due to the special instructional requirements attached to magnet programs. It would also potentially interrupt activity at a school that represents a BCPS success story despite its physical limitations.

Appendix A: Relevant Collateral Materials

GWWO System wide Physical Facilities Assessment

http://www.bcps.org/system/misc/Facilities_Assessment_GWWO.pdf

High School Capacity Timeline

http://www.bcps.org/system/misc/HS_Capacity_Study_Timeline_Sept2018.pdf

High School Capacity Flyer

http://www.bcps.org/system/misc/HS_Capacity_Study_Flyer_Sept2018.pdf

Letter from Sage about Community Feedback update

http://www.bcps.org/system/misc/Sage_Letter_071818.pdf

Email Log

<http://www.bcps.org/system/misc/HSStudyEmailLog092518to100418.pdf>

<http://www.bcps.org/system/misc/HSStudyEmailLog091718to092518.pdf>

<http://www.bcps.org/system/misc/HSStudyEmailLog082118to091718.pdf>

<http://www.bcps.org/system/misc/HSStudyEmailLog080318to082018.pdf>

<http://www.bcps.org/system/misc/HSStudyEmailLog072718to080318.pdf>

<http://www.bcps.org/system/misc/HSStudyEmailLog071918to072718.pdf>

<http://www.bcps.org/system/misc/HSStudyEmailLog071318to071918.pdf>

<http://www.bcps.org/system/misc/HSStudyEmailLog062918to071318.pdf>

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Verletta White ♦ Interim Superintendent ♦ 6901 North Charles Street ♦ Towson, MD ♦ 21204

July 27, 2018

Dear BCPS Family, Community, and Stakeholders:

I want to thank staff and the community for its early engagement in the high school study conducted by the Sage Policy Group, Inc. (“Sage”). As we begin to develop the foundation for a plan to meet our ever growing high school population, it is important that we hear from stakeholders from across our system.

I am pleased that Sage quickly summarized the key themes that have emerged from the focus groups and public information sessions. We are committed to using this feedback to shape the remainder of the study.

First, Baltimore County Public Schools (“BCPS”) will work with Sage to ensure that building conditions are taken into consideration as we move forward. We have asked that Sage proceed with this recommendation and make the consideration of conditions transparent in the scenarios presented in the public information sessions in September.

Secondly, from both the information sessions and early survey results, it is clear that the continuity of communities and feeder patterns is very important to our stakeholders. Therefore, Sage will also take community continuity and feeder patterns into account as they develop the final round of scenarios.

Finally, improving instructional opportunities for students is at the core of our work. Expanding magnet programs provides an opportunity to improve instructional programs and to provide more equitable opportunities for our students while potentially limiting the number of boundaries that would need to be changed.

I look forward to seeing the next round of scenarios that will reflect the feedback to date, and I encourage our community to remain engaged with the process as we move forward. We are listening to you.

Please continue to provide input through the survey and the remaining public information sessions. Your feedback is important as we plan for the future of our community.

Thank you.



Verletta White
Interim Superintendent